

SOCIAL LIFE AND CULTURAL PRACTICES AMONG THE MERCHANT GROUP IN MUGHAL GUJARAT

THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

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IN

HISTORY

BY

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Abstract

The theme 'Social Life and Cultural Practices Among the Merchant Group in Mughal Gujarat' proposed to address the social dimension of otherwise commercially acknowledged region – Gujarat. The merchant group were fenced off in order to address vital problems linked to structural morphology of the mercantile community, their organisation, nature of professional network as also proximity to the administrators.

The present endeavour though largely based on the classic works of Pearson, Ashin Das Gupta, Makarand Mehta, Ruby Maloni et al undertakes a fresh approach on the several dimensions integral to the Merchant groups such as Bohras, Parsis, Ghanchis, Memons and Europeans etc.

The first chapter focuses the broadlines of the region - namely that the region of Gujarat had considerable agricultural resources to sustain and provide impetus to mercantile activities, evidence also indicates the presence of accelerate activity in commercial and manufacturing centres. This peculiarly conductive environment led to the region becoming a hub not only of thriving mercantile institutions and capital but also becoming a conglomerate of skilled artisans and craftsmen. As a result it was properly connected by inland and overseas trade routes and the elements which supported its commercial life.

The second chapter contains the major communities, their origin, involvement in trade and commerce, and their settlement. The main communities during 16th-17th centuries were Banias, Bohras, Chalebis, Khojas, Memons, Parsis, Ghanchis and Europeans. These communities were spread all over the Gujarat, especially in commercial and industrial centres.

Third chapter outlines living standard of the merchants. To assess the living standards, some important aspects of merchants' life has been studied, such as

their housing, everyday life, dresses, ornaments, resorts, parties, education, women's status, language, their source of entertainments, religion and their food habits etc. On the basis of these aspects one can guage their social status.

Fourth chapter entails the social customs mores of merchants, which includes marriages, polygamy, child marriage, intermarriages in different castes, widow remarriage, custom of *sati,* ceremonies related to child birth, ceremonies related to death and festivals etc. The cultural dimension reflected herein shows a gross assimilation of social and religious values in Indian heritage.

Chapter five intends to focus the relations of merchants with the Mughals and their officials in the region. This exercise samples certain important merchants like Shantidas Zaveri, Mulla Abdul Ghafur and Virji Vora to buttress the thesis of close proximity of the two vital entities merchant and the Mughal court.

Sixth chapter intends to assess the ways in which the merchant communities invested their capital. The main areas of their investment were shipbuilding business and their respective commercial enterprise. They also invested in luxurious mansions and gardens in the region as well as overseas, forts, troops, charity, public welfare, education and learning, religious buildings, money lending, cotton trade and shipping insurance etc.

Seventh and the last chapter consist of an appraisal of different institutions of merchant communities, like guilds, *mahajans*, *nagarsheth*, brokers, *sahukar* and *saraf*. These institutions were maintained for smooth conduct of mercantile transactions. Regarding the institution of *nagarsheth* Tripathi and Mehta observe that "Shantidas has never been mentioned as a *nagarsheth* in any of

the contemporary documents, and this title was not prefixed with his name in *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, which never refers to Khushalchand (Shantidas's son) without the title." Khushalchand had established an undisputed claim to the epithet of *nagarsheth*, not only for himself, but also for his descendents. This clearly indicates that none in the long line of such *nagarsheths* belonged to any other family. The development of this portfolio was a peculiarity of a particular family.

Our study concludes that despite vigorous commercial enterprise of the various merchant communities they have to be contextualised not only in economic perspective, but also as a major social entity. The variant religious and cultural practices are equally significant dimensions which have enriched in multifarious manner the Gujarati culture and Indian heritage at large. The rich culture synthesis of communities like Parsis, Ghanchis, Bohra, Banias have lent much to the aesthetic values of the Indian subcontinent.

Abstract

REGIONWISE CONCENTRATION OF MERCHANT COMMUNITIES OF GUJARAT (16TH – 17TH c.)

PARSI
BOHRA
KHOJA
MEMON
BANIA
GHANCHI

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Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis **'Social Life and Cultural Practices Among the Merchant Group in Mughal Gujarat'** by **Ms. Monika Sharma** is the original work of the candidate and is suitable for submission to the examiners for the award of the Ph.D. degree.

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Monika Sharma

Abbreviation

Ain	- *Ain-i-Akbari*
C. A. S.	- Centre of Advanced Study
C. U. P.	- Cambridge University Press
E.F.I.	- The English Factories in India
Fatawa	- *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*
Hak. Soc.	- Haklyut Society
I. E. S. H. R.	- The Indian Economic and Social History Review
J. G. R. S.	- Journal of Gujarat Research Society
J. M. S. U. B.	- Journals of Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda
J. U. B.	- Journals of University of Bombay
Letter Received	- *Letter Received by East India Company from its Servants in the East*
M. F.	- Microfilm
Mughal Atlas	- *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*
Muntakhab	- *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*
N. A. I.	- National Archives of India
O. U. P.	- Oxford University Press
P. I. H. C.	- Proceedings of Indian History Congress
R. Y.	- Regnal Year
S. Y.	- *Saka* Year
Supl.	- Supplement

Tabaqat	- *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*
Barani	- *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*
Tuzuk	- *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*
V. S.	- *Vikram Samvat*

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Introduction

Broadly speaking medieval Indian merchant has attracted the attention of historians in two major concerns. First and foremost concern was the thorough reconstruction of the extant evidence to grapple with theme of changed scenario as a consequence of the advent of the Portuguese. In our context mention worthy are the works of Pearson which underlines the spice trade and tribute as the major assets to augment the Portuguese Empire. Moreland in his *India at the death of Akbar* and *Akbar to Aurangzeb* alternatively shifted attention towards the Dutch and East India Company.[1] It goes to the credit of Ashin Das Gupta to have brought the theme of Indian merchants engaged in overseas commerce to the focal point through his work *Merchants of Surat* and *Indian Merchants and the decline of Surat.*[2] Similar exercise involved Om Prakash[3] and Sushil Choudhary[4] in the context of Bengal.

The other theme which has been treated as a blanket over the merchants is that of middle class, a topic significantly taken over by the pioneering attempt of W. C. Smith.[5] The various facets attached to the problem are studied by Satish Chandra,[6] M. N. Pearson,[7] Ashin Das Gupta. The above works have assessed the proximity of the two significant entities merchants and the Mughal Empire.

Gujarat was the most prosperous *subah* in Mughal period. It enjoyed the identity of high incidence of urbanisation and well developed trade and commerce. The ports in Gujarat provided commodities to different places as far as south-east and west Asia. It was also a manufacturing centre for high quality textiles which had a large demand in internal and international market. Due to its accelerated commercial activities and ports,

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[1] Moreland, W.H., *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, London, 1923.

[2] Gupta, Ashin Das, *Merchants of Maritime India 1500-1800*, Hampshire, 1994; Gupta, Ashin Das, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c.1700-1750,* New Delhi, 1994.

[3] Prakash, Om, 'The European Trading Companies and the Merchants of Bengal, 1650-1725', I.E.S.H.R., I (3), 1964, pp. 39-63.

[4] Choudhary, Sushil, *Trade and Commercial Organisation in Bengal, 1650-1720, with Special reference to East India Company*, Calcutta, 1975.

[5] Smith, W.C., 'The Mughal Empire and the Middle Classes', *Islamic Culture,* 1944, pp. 349-363.

[6] Chandra, Satish, 'Commercial Activities of the Mughal Emperors During the seventeenth Century', *Medieval India*, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 147-154.

[7] Pearson, M.N., *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, University of California press, Barkley and Los Angeles, London, 1976; *Coastal Western India*, N. Delhi, 1981; *The Portuguese in India*, C.U.P., Cambridge, 1987 (reprint- 1990, 2006).

it played an important role in the development of trade and commerce, Gujarat has always been acknowledged as commercial, urbanized and affluent region in Indian History.

One can discern the broad spectra of this region in order to understand the larger vision of sixteenth – seventeenth century. M.S. Commissariat's pioneer work *A History of Gujarat* in two volumes and *Studies in the History of Gujarat* was the first attempt to write the history of this region in a systematic manner, in which he has dealt with all the possible aspects in detail such as political, social, administrative and for some extant the economic.[8]

I

The first genre of literature would be scholars like B. M. Malabari[9] and R. N. Majmudar[10] who have created groundwork on culture. S. C. Misra has made worthwhile study on Muslim communities of Gujarat. He has furnished great details on Muslim communities of the Gujarat in his *Muslim Communities in Gujarat.*[11] However he has given information about their origin and main professions, their organizations and population in the region. Piloo Nanavutty[12] has outlined the development of Parsi community. Makarand Mehta[13] has raised question related to social aspects of the different communities.

The other genre would be K. L. Gillion,[14] Ashin Das Gupta and Ruby Maloni[15] who have outlined a particular city and port of Gujarat. Surendra Gopal,[16] Makarand

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[8] Commissariat, M.S., *A History of Gujarat*, 2 Vols., II, Bombay, 1957; Commissariat, M.S., *Studies in the History of Gujarat*, Ahmadabad, 1987.

[9] Malabari, B.M., *Gujarat and Gujaratis: Picture of Men and Manners Taken from Life,* W.H. Allen & Co., London, 1882.

[10] Majmudar, R.N. *Cultural History of Gujarat*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1965.

[11] Misra, S.C., *Muslim Communities in Mughal Gujarat*, Baroda, 1964.

[12] Nanavutty, Piloo, *The Parsis*, Delhi, 1977 (Reprint-1980).

[13] Mehta, Makarand, *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, Delhi, 1991; Mehta, Makarand, *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, Baroda, 2009.

[14] Gillion, Kenneth L., *Ahmadabad: A Study in Indian Urban History*, California, 1968.

[15] Maloni, Ruby, *Surat: Port of the Mughal Empire*, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, 2003; Maloni, Ruby, *European Merchant capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records, 1630-1668*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1992.

Mehta and M. N. Pearson have variously focussed on merchants, their organisations and entrepreneurship.

M.N. Pearson on the other hand has observed the perspective of trade and commerce of Asia and Gujarat, how these mercantile activities were operative in this region. He has also supplied information and role of Portuguese merchants in Gujarat and their terms and relations with the rulers.

Makarand Mehta in his *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, has highlighted the merchants of Gujarat in the context of business and economy of the state in seventeenth century, port of Surat and the famous Jain merchant of the town in the seventeenth century - Virji Vora. He makes interesting study of the Bania merchants and role of shroffs or *sarafs* of Gujarat, paper industry of Muslim merchants of Ahmadabad and agate industry of Cambay etc. In the other work *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, he has discussed international trading activities and custom duties since Harappan times to the period of Mughals.

Ashin Das Gupta in his *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat c. 1700-1750*, discussed the commercial aspects of the port of Surat. How this port flourished as an international port, what were the reasons of its emergence, why this port declined in 18th century and the logic behind its decline gauging different phases of decline, assessing the role of important merchants of the port town such as Mulla Abdul Ghafur.

Ruby Maloni in her *European Merchant Capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records, 1630-1668* and *Surat: Port of the Mughal Empire*, has also discussed Surat port. Basically her work is also based on economic history and the importance of this port of the region.

II

Despite historians' unmeasurably great attention on Mughal Gujarat, research investigations have based themselves exclusively on European sources. M.N. Pearson has highly relied on Portuguese sources. Ashin Das Gupta's influential study on Surat

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[16] Gopal, Surendra, *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1975.

in the Mughal period is based primarily on Dutch sources, whereas historian like Lakshmi Subramaniyam has studied Gujarat through English sources. Historians have largely ignored the regional sources. The present study intends to cull regional sources along-side Persian and European sources.

Fortunately we have rich of profusion regional Gujarati sources which can be tapped for studies like ours. Ample supply of data can be culled from the varied nature of sources on Gujarat.

It seems worthwhile to give due attention to regional Gujarati sources. The main Gujarati sources for present study would be the *Khatpatras*[17] and other sources like Maganlal Vakatchand's[18] *Amdabadno Itihas* (History of Ahmadabad) in which author discusses political and social history of the city from ancient period. He has also investigated geographical features of the city and utilized water resources. The author ascribes reasons to develop such a city, its buildings etc. The main feature of this source is the reflection on tradition of *Nagarsheth* and its hierarchy in Ahmadabad.

Narmada Shankar[19] in his *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat* (A Brief History of Surat) provides a graphic layout of Surat city, its morphology in detail, viz. its fortresses, Markets, Inn, port of Rander, area of Machhiwada, history from sixteenth century A.D. to nineteenth century in brief. Interesting information is supplied on the prominent natives, chiefly the merchants and traditions etc.

Ishwarlal Ichharam Desai's[20] *Surat Sonani Murat* (A Beautiful City Surat) is an interesting account of Surat city. It gives details of History, European Travellers - Hawkins, Tavernier and Thomas Roe. It also provides details of Maratha attack on the city. The other features are interesting details on Bohra community and prominent Bohra merchants like Abdul Ghafur, Sheikh Hamid and Sheikh Fazil etc, and titles and honours given by Mughal Emperors to them, and economic prosperity of the city.

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[17] *Khatpatras* are the sale deeds, which contains rich information of property dealings of different communities. These documents are preserved in Bhulabhai Jaisinghbhai Institute of Research and Learning, Ashram Road, Ahmadabad.

[18] Vakhatchand, Maganlal, *Amadabadno Itihas*, Ahmadabad, 1977 (Reprint).

[19] Shankar, Narmada, *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, Union Press, Mumbai, 1866.

[20] Desai, Ishwarlal Ichharam, *Surat Sonani Murat*, Surat, 1958, (Reprint- 2004).

Deepak Bardolikar's[21] *Sunni Vahora* contains some rare information of Bohra community, especially the Sunni Bohra, their customs, traditions, origin, social life, how and why they converted into Islam? Why they were preferred to be Sunni Bohras, their profession and classification into different groups etc. and in *Vahora Vibhutiyo* Bardolikar supplies significant information of prominent Bohras in Gujarat and other places.

Jain Aitihasik Rasmala of Buddhisagarji[22] deals with the Jain community and gives interesting information about the community, and the *Nagarsheths* of this community. It gives detailed information about Shantidas and his works and information about his business and family.

Parsi Vishayo[23] gives valuable information of Parsi community, their different genealogical suffix, exhaustive details are found on Customs and marriages.

Parsi Praja[24] has important information about origin and native domicile of Parsis, their religion, ideology, deity and religious traditions. Their diaspora in Indian sub-continent structural morphology, trade and industry, professions are some other significant aspects.

Mahagujaratno Musalmano[25] deals with the larger Muslim communities in Gujarat, like - Khojas, Bohras, Memons, Lohanas, Karalia, Mahedavi and others. It gives valuable information of Muslim merchant communities.

In *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*[26], the author has given rare information on structural layout, origin and locality of Cambay. He traces its history from ancient period and also gives information about Parsis and Muslims of Cambay.

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[21] Bardolikar, Deepak, *Sunni Vahora*, Bohra Prakashan, Malir City, Karachi, 1984.

[22] Buddhisagarji, *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, Eds. Mohanlal Dalichand Desai, 2 Vols., Ahmadabad, 1912.

[23] Desai, S.M., *Parsi Vishayo*, Navsari, 1914.

[24] Nanavutty, Piloo, *Parsi Praja*, National Book Trust, 1997.

[25] Master, Karim Mehmud, *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), Prachya Vidya Mandir, M.S. University, Baroda, 1969.

[26] Pandya, Jugalbhai Mangalram, *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, Ahmadabad Gujarat Gazette press, Ahmadabad, 1899.

Khambhatno Itihas[27] is a history of Cambay from ancient period to early modern period. It gives information about geography, climate, rivers, monuments, organizations, Trade and commerce, Industries and employment, Social development, Political structure and economy of the Cambay.

Khambhatna Sanskrutik Darshan[28] gives details of cultural and social aspects of Cambay. It gives information of the operative trade and commerce, role of European merchants, officials in port administration - *Mutasaddi* and *Peshkaar* etc. Information pertaining to climate, trade routes and gardens etc. is also incorporated.

Gujaratno Rajkiya ane Sanskrutik Itihas[29] was published by Bhulabhai Jaisinghbhai Institute, Ahmadabad, in the several volumes. Volume-6 of this series is dedicated to Mughal period (Mughal *Kaal*). This series as its name indicates, contains, information about political and cultural history of Gujarat.

Tarikh-i-Sorath va Haalar[30] is the history of Saurashtra region, which gives details administrative and political structure of Junagarh, Saurashtra and Jamnagar.

Surat Itihas Darshan[31] traces history of the development of the city of Surat. The different regimes of Gujarat, like Solankis, Vaghelas and Mughals are noted. It also discusses the European trading companies and their factories. Interesting information about Parsis and Jains in Surat is also found.

Gujaratna Bandaro[32] as its name suggests, contains rich information about the ports and harbours of Gujarat. The geographical intricacies are amicably dealt.

Kanhadade Prabanadh[33] is versified contribution of Padmanabh, dedicated to Kanhada Deva Chauhana, which give details of society and politics of the medieval Gujarat.

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[27] Jote, Ratanrao Bhimrao, *Khambhatno Itihas*, Ahmadabad, 1935.

[28] Bhatt, Narmadashankar Triyambakram, *Khambayatnu Sanskritik darshan*, Cambay, 1976.

[29] Shastri, Hariprasad Gangashankar & Rasiklal Chhotalal Parikh, *Mughal Kaal (Gujarat Rajkiya Ane Sanskritik Itihas,*Vol.-6, Bhulabhai.Jaisinghbhai Institute, Ahmadabad, 1979.

[30] Amarji, Deewan Ranchhorji, *Tarikh-i-Sorath va Haalar*, Junagarh, 1978.

[31] *Surat Itihas Darshan*, Published by Surat Mahanagar Palika, 1999.

[32] Rajgor, Sivaprasad, *Gujaratna Bandaro – Ek Parichaya*, Ahmadabad, 1987.

[33] Padmanabh, *Kanhadade Prabandh*, Tr. By V.S. Bhatnagar, Aditya Prakashan, New Delhi, 1991.

Apart from the Gujarati sources, the first autobiography in Hindi by a Jain merchant *Ardhakathanak*[34] and Persian sources substantiate this study. These important sources are the *Farmans*[35] issued for the merchants' communities of Gujarat by Mughal Emperors, *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnama* of Abul Fazl[36], which provides important information about the *subah* of Gujarat. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* and its supplement of Ali Mohammad Khan[37] are the mines of information for this study. Other important sources are *Mirat-i-Sikandari*[38] which contains valuable information of the sultanate of Gujarat, *Tarikh-i-Gujarat*[39] is also very important to know about the history of the region. Other than these sources *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* and *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*[40] of Barani, and *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* of Badaoni are also very helpful.

Accounts of European travellers are also very helpful with above mentioned sources. They have left interesting information about the country and the *subah*. Accounts of William Finch, Ralph Fitch, Withington,[41] Mandelslo,[42] Barbosa,[43] Abbe Carre,[44] John Fryer,[45] Alexander Hamilton,[46] Manucci,[47] Ovington,[48] Peter Mundi,[49]

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[34] Banarsidas, *Ardhakathanak*, Tr. Mukund Lath, Rajasthan Prakrit Bharti, Jaipur, 1981.

[35] *Selected Documents of Shah Jahan's Reign*, Published by *Daftar-i-Diwani*, Hyderabad, 1950; Tirmizi, S.A.I., *Mughal Documents 1628-1659*, vol. II, Manohar, New Delhi, 1995; Commissariat, M.S., 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', Journals of the University of Bombay, IX (July), 1940.

[36] Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eds. Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, 1883; Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, Eds. Maulawi Abdur Rahim, 3 Vols., III, Calcutta, 1879.

[37] Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supplement), Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1930; Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Tr. M.F. Lokhandwala, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1965.

[38] Sikandar bin Muhammad Alias Manjhu, *Mirat-i-Sikandari*, Eds. S.C. Misra and M.S. Rehman, Baroda, 1961.

[39] Mir Abu Turab Wali, *Tarikh-i-Gujarat*, Eds. E.D. Ross, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1909

[40] Ziauddin Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*, Eds. Sir Syed Ahmad, Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 2005.

[41] Foster, William, *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Low Price Publication, Delhi, 2007 (reprint).

[42] Commissariat, M.S., *Mandelslo's Travels in Western India*, Oxford, 1931.

[43] Barbosa, Duarte, *Book of Barbosa: An Account of The Countries Bordering to The Indian Ocean And Their Inhabitants*, 3 Vols., Eds. Mansel Longworth Dames, Indian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1918-21 (Reprint-1982).

[44] Fawcatt, Sir Charles, *The Travels of the Abbe Carre in India and the near East-1672-1674*, Tr. Lady Fawcett, 2 Vols., New Delhi, 1990 (Reprint).

[45] Fryer, John, *A New Account of East India and Persia-1672-1681*, Eds. William Crooke, 3 Vols., Hakluyt Society, London, 1909 (Reprint-New Delhi, 1992).

Thevenot, Careri,[50] Tome Pires,[51] Tavernier[52] and Pietro Della Valle[53] are the sources to know about inland routes, culture, trade and commerce, import, export, dresses and customs of the region.

III

The separation of the realm of social and cultural history from its neighbouring areas of research particularly economic history has been deemed pertinent for the present study in order to do justice to the social aspects related to merchant community. This arbitrary fencing of social history is premised to address the problems related to morphology of the mercantile community, their organisation, nature of professional network and its relations with administrators. The social background of the related mercantile communities such as Parsis, Chalebis and Bohras etc. are interesting dimensions which needs to be tapped. How far they were able to absorb to offices in the bureaucracy which carried social significance and marked elevation of social status?

This study intends to explore the region of Gujarat its geographical layout, urban set-up, trade centres, cities, manufacturing centres, ports and trade routes for a better comprehension of the perspective.

Present study focuses on the identification of the varied communities involved in commercial activities and in maritime trade, their areas of excellence. This chapter intends to identify the major merchant communities of Gujarat as well as broadly outline their chief commercial activities, area of operation and distinct repute in

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[46] Hamilton, Capt. Alexender, *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, 2 Vols., London, 1739 (Reprint- New Delhi, 1995).

[47] Manucci, Niccolao, *Storia dor Mogor 1653-1708*, Tr. & Eds. William Irvine, 4 Vols., Low Price Publication, 2010.

[48] Ovington, J., *A Voyage to Surat*, Ed. H.G. Rawlingson, London, 1929 (Reprint- New Delhi, 1994).

[49] Mundi, Peter, *The Travels of Peter Mundi in Europe and Asia-1608-1667*, 2 Vols., Hakluyt Society, London, 1914.

[50] Sen, S.N., *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, The National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949.

[51] Pires, Tome, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, 2 Vols., Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1990.

[52] Tavernier, Jean Baptiste, *Travels in India*, Eds. William Crooke, 2 Vols., London, 1928 (Reprint- New Delhi, 1977).

[53] Valle, Pietro Della, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, 2 Vols., Eds. Edward Grey, Haklyut Society, London, 1892.

Gujarat. Thus the major merchant communities of Gujarat include Banias, Bohras. Parsis, Khojas, Memons, Ghanchis, Chalebis, Armenians and European traders Among most of these, there were different septs and other categories.

This study also contains the issue of living standards, viz. housing, system of education, entertainment, the status women, food habits, dresses, ornaments and other aspects of their daily life etc. are investigated in order to make a comparative study of the different cultures. As yet we have scanty information about the standard of living in Gujarat, where the large majority of merchants lived. As we have seen in an earlier chapter the merchant community was segmented socially and economically and there was considerable inequality in the economic resource base. This chapter entails an explorative study of such aspects in order to do proper justice to the social and cultural dimensions of merchant community operating in Gujarat. We can thus estimate and compare the necessities of the life of the merchant communities. The data of the same is found in rich profusion in the regional Gujarati sources.

This chapter also intends to know about the religion, social activities, festivals, rituals, marriages, customs and mores followed. These aspects are largely ignored by the scholars and make an interesting explorative study. This chapter entails the investigation of custom, rituals and mores related to society and religion of the various merchant communities. One can also discern the existing social evils like *sati*, polygamy and enforced widowhood. There seems great emphasis laid by each community on the pursuance of their rights and customs. It is a pity that such aspects have not attracted due attention of historians of the region as yet.

The focal point of the study is merchants-Mughal nexus too, which is vital to understand the benefits accrued by the merchant communities. In what manner the proximity with imperial court benefitted them and resulted in their social elevation.

One of the objectives of this study would be contextualise the idea of money for different merchants, which is discussed in chapter six. How the various communities invested their money to acquire political and social advantages. The item of luxury availed by the merchant Prince and their assets outside the region.

Finally the last chapter attempts to outline what kind of institutions were operative among in merchants' communities, the stable system of brokers, *sarraf* and *sahukars*, *mahajan*, and *nagarsheth* which sustained the community. How these institutions came

into existence and the role of such institutions in commercial activities as well as in local administration? In what manner the merchant community benefitted from these institutions and the manner in which these became nucleus of commercial culture.

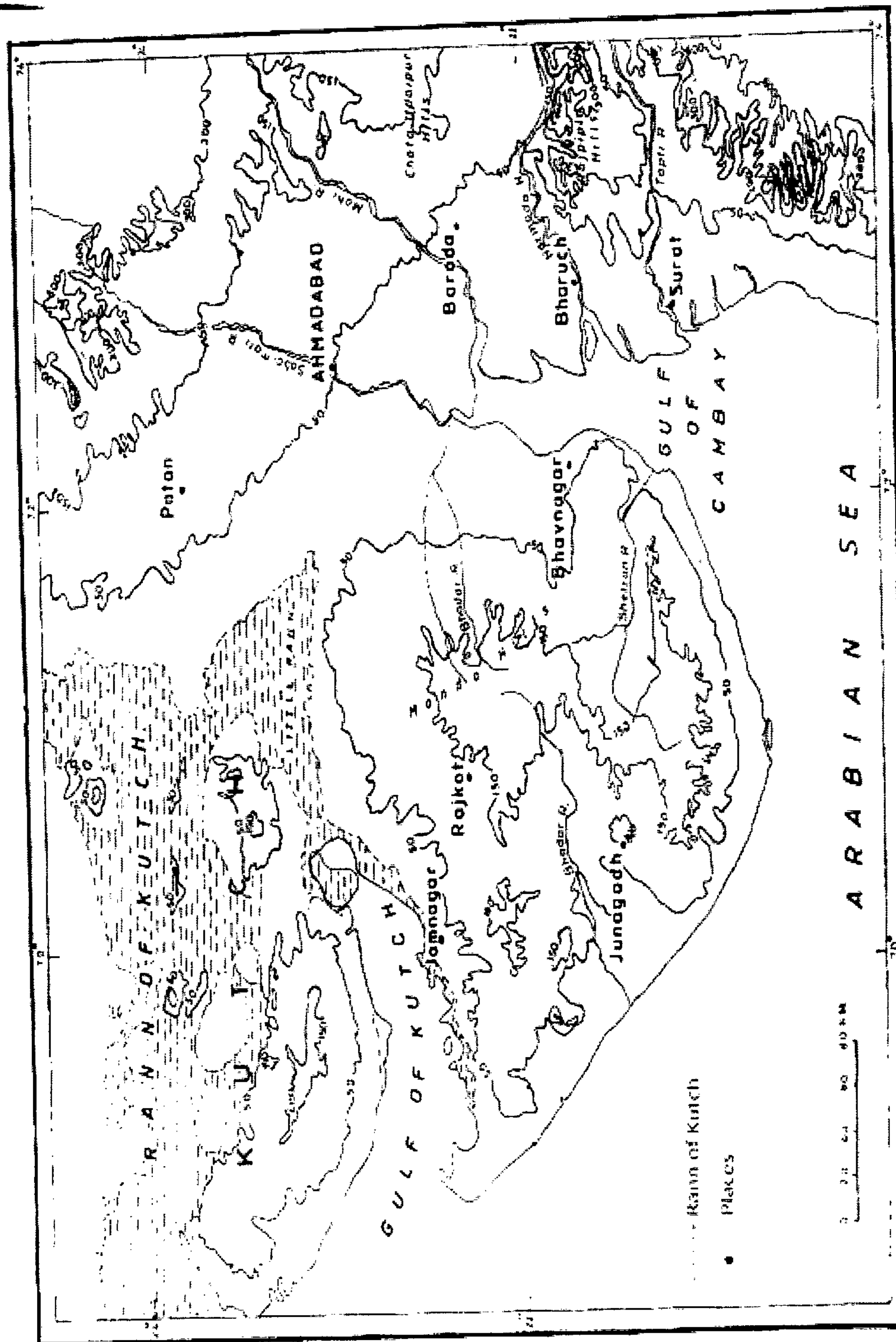
Chapter-1

Region of Gujarat:

Main Features Complimenting

Trade and Commerce

Map - 1



(based on *Mughal Atlas*)

In order to appreciate the presence of varied nature of mercantile community in Gujarat one has to acknowledge the characteristics of the region which facilitated such a phenomenon. It can be gleaned by the rich nature of data contained in Mughal chronicles, regional Gujarati documents and travelogues that the region of Gujarat had considerable agricultural resources to sustain and provide impetus to mercantile activities, evidences also indicates the presence of accelerated activity in commercial and manufacturing centres. This peculiarly conducive environment led to the region becoming a hub not only of thriving mercantile institutions and capital but also becoming a conglomerate of skilled artisans and craftsmen. As a result it was properly connected by inland and overseas trade routes.

This chapter intends to explore the region of Gujarat its geographical layout, urban set-up, trade centres, cities, manufacturing centres, ports and trade routes for a better comprehension of the perspective discussed above.

Geographical Layout:

Ain gives detailed information of medieval Gujarat, which covers a large area from Burhanpur to Jagat.[1] Gujarat was flanked by Khandesh on the east, to the north Jalor and Idar, to the south the ports of Daman and Cambay, and on the west, Jagat which is on the seashore.

Mountains: Region of Gujarat has big and small mountains in all the directions: In the north, Mount Pawa, Lunawara, Sunth, Banswara and Dongarpur extended to the mountains of Udaipur.[2] Pawa is in Champaner *sarkar*, it has fountains, reservoirs and the stream called *vikhand*.[3] In the north-east, from Idar (in Ahmadabad *sarkar*), Danta Samphar, Palanpur and Dantiwara, touching Mount Abu which connects the hills on the

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1. Jagat is another name of Dwarka in Kathiawar and the distance between Burhanpur to Jagat was 302 *kos*. The breadth of this region was 260 *kos* from Jalor to the port of Daman. From Idar to Khambayat (Cambay) it was 70 *kos*. See Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eds. Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, 1883. P. 114; Also see Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Tr. M.F. Lokhandwala, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1965, p. 18.

[2] Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supplement), Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1930, pp. 246.

[3] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), op. cit., p. 246.

Ajmer frontier.[4] In the north-west, the Kutch hills extend to the sea shore.[5] In the west, in the Sorath *sarkar* the land is almost hilly.

Girnar, near Junagarh had different kinds of trees, mango groves and all types of flowers. It has running brooks, wells, tanks and ponds. It also had wild animals such as deer, mountain ox and *nilgai*. Girnar was the most sacred mountain for Banias. *Jamil*, a mountain joins the *Girnar* and connected with the name of a Muslim saint Jamil Shah. The Hindus relate it with Mahadev. Both communities undertook pilgrimage to it. The rivulet *Sonrekha* rises between Gir and *Jamil.*[6] In the Sorath *sarkar*, some other important mountains were also there, such as *Usam*, 10 *kos* from Junagarh. *Sodachal* or *Satrunjaya*, in Palitana (in Sorath *sarkar*) named after the river *Satrunja*, it had fountains of sweet water and famous Jain temples of Jains on its peak. *Gopha* was there in Jagat or Dwarka.[7] In the south, some mountains extended from Surat port to Nandurbar and Baglan (in the province of Deccan).[8]

In the south-east, in Nandod *sarkar* there is *Vindhyachal* or *Rajpipla* mountains. It extended to the hills of *Jabua* or *Jhalora* and *Ali Mohan* or *Ali Mohammad*, and then crossing the *Khanapur* pass touches the boundary of Bengal. The travellers and *sanyasis* of Surat used to visit. Wild elephants lived in the valley near *Ali Mohan/Mohammad.* Running brooks, tank, different trees were found there. A temple is also there dedicated to Mahadev.[9]

Rivers: Gujarat is water fed by the Narmada, Tapti and Mahi etc. Besides the Ocean, there are the *Sabarmati*, the *Narmada*, the *Tapti*, the *Saraswati* and two springs called *Ganges* and *Jamna*. The climate is temperate and the sandy character of the soil prevents it from turning into mud in the rainy season.[10]

Mirat considers that *saraswati* was the most important river for Brahmins. In Gujarat, it appears near Mount Abu and passes through the Siddhpur in Pattan and Kodinar in

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[4] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 246.

[5] Ibid., p. 247.

[6] Ibid, pp. 246, 247-249.

[7] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 247.

[8] Ibid., p. 246.

[9] Ibid., pp. 246, 247.

[10] *Ain*, II, op. cit., p. 114.

Sorath, and then divides into many branches.[11] *Narmada* is also called *Rewa*, one of the great rivers of the region, crosses Malwa into Gujarat, and then fall into the sea. *Tapi* or *Tapti* rises in the mountains of Deccan and fall into the sea near Surat. *Kim* rises in the mountains of Deccan and falls into the sea near Olpad near Surat. *Mahendri* also called *Mahi* falls near the port of Cambay.[12] *Sabarmati*, near the Ahmadabad, after joining other streams reaches Cambay and falls into the sea.[13] *Bhadar*, rises in the hills of Sorath and passing Jetpur then falls into the ocean towards the east by way of Dhanduka.[14]

Climate: The economy of South and South-east Asia is largely dependent on the monsoon winds, and the amount of rain they bring with them. These monsoons were, and to a large extent are, the governing factor controlling shipping in the surroundings seas. They largely determined when a particular route could be sailed, when a market would be high or low, and when a punitive naval expedition could be undertaken. For example, the "season" for trade from Gujarat to Aden was from September to May, for Aden to Malabar from October to February.[15]

***Jazira* / Islands:** *Mirat* refers to eight islands in its geographical survey. The related details are stated thus[16] :

1. *Piram Bisram* lies between Gogha and Surat. The merchant named Mulla Mohammad Ali, grandson of Mulla Abdul Ghafur, built towers and battlement for the fortress, and sent people to reside there, during the reign of Emperor Mohammad Shah.

2. *Sultanpur* was in Talaja, near Gogha. It is surrounded by sea at high tides and then it becomes a peninsula.

3. *Qutubpur* was in *pargana* Mahuva.

4. *Diu*: was in *pargana* Una and covers 3 *kos*.

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[11] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), pp. 242-243.

[12] Ibid. p. 243.

[13] Ibid., pp. 243-245.

[14] Ibid., p. 245.

[15] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, op. cit., p. 7.

[16] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 240.

5. *Shankhoddhar* was in *pargana* Jagat or Dwarka. It is one of the great temples of Hindus. A tomb of a saint-Haji Kirmani is also there.

6. *Sankotretha* was near Mahuva.

7. *Sayalpeth* was near Mahuva.

8. *Danda Rajput* lies between the Surat and Deccan. [17]

Sub-Divisions *of Subah* of Gujarat :

The *subah* of Gujarat was divided into sixteen *sarkar* after it was conquered by Akbar.[18] Six of them pay tribute (*peshkashi*) while the rest of the ten had to pay revenue.[19] Among these *sarkars* Pattan had the largest area and it was also the highest revenue paying *sarkar*, while Sorath had maximum number of *parganas*.

The above *sarkars* were namely:

REVENUE PAYING *SARKARS*

SARKAR	**AREA (in *bigha*)[20]**	**REVENUE (in *Dams*)[21]**	**NO. OF PARGANA[22]**	**NAME OF PARGANAS**
Pattan	38,500,015	600,325,099	17	Haveli Pattan, Vadnagar, Bijapur, Palanpur, Tharad, Terwara, Deesa, Dantiwara, Rasulnagar, Radhanpur, Sami, Santalpur, Kheralu, Kankrej, Munjpur, and Surwara.
Ahmadabad	8,024,153	208,306, 994	33	Haveli Ahmadabad, Arharmatar, Azmabad, Idar, Ahmadnagar, Bahial, Balasinor, Prantej, Piplod, Viramgam/ Jhalawar, Thamna, Chorasi, Petlad, Jhalabara, Haidrabad, Dholka, Dhanduka, Sarmal/Thasra, Shahjahanpur/ Kanira, Kapadvanj, Kadi, Modasa or Makhrej, Mehmudabad, Mamurabad, Monda or Mahudha, Nadiad and Harsol.

[17] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 242.

[18] In the time of the Sultans of Gujarat, there were 25 *sarkars. Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 188.

[19] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 188.

[20] *Ain*, II, pp. 120-124.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), pp. 188-224.

Surat	1,312,815	19,035,180	31	Chorasi, Rander, Haroli, Balsar, Chikhli, Marpara, Bardoli, Momra, Gandevi, Balesar, Malur, Khandka, Sahrat, Balvara, Anawal, Vahmuri, Lohari, Bansar, Sirbhon, Kharod, Mosar, Mahuwa, Biyadra, Kus, Barjot, Talari, Kamrej, Navsari, and Talsir.
Baroda	922,212	41,145,895	4	Baroda, Bahadurpur, Dabhoi, and Sinor.
Nandod	541,817	8,797,596	12	*Haveli* Nandod, Amroli, Badal, Bahwa, Tilakwada, Jammugam, Maragdara or Kukurmonda, Sarek, Udah, Murmi, Kuwali Saha, and Basrai.
Godhra	535,255	3,418,624	15	Godhra, Jhalod, Shera, Dhamod, Nadli, Nemdah, Mathral, Morvah, Kohana, Dodah, and Ambavav.
Broach	349, 771	21,845,663	14	Broach, Ankleshwar, Utleshwar, Orhar, Tarkeshwar, Chermandvi, Jambusar, Dehijbara, Galla, Gulbara, Kahunduhar, Maqbulabad or Amod, and Hansot.
Champaner	80,337	15,009,884	13	*Haveli* Champaner or Halol and Kalol, Derol, Unadra, Jaladra, Choras Champaner or Waghodia, Tamurbasna, Dohad, Sankhera, Savli, Walia and Mohan.
Sorath	-	63,437,366	62	Junagarh, Adyata, Una, Amreli, Arteja, Bilkha, Banna, Bandar, Bhund, Bantwa, Jamjharao, Bagsara, Palitana, Pattan Deo, Porbandar, Navibandar, Ramabao, Jahanian, Bilirani, Talaja, Jagat or Dwarka or Mustafanagar, Jetpur, Chorwar, Jhao, Dharmal, Varnagar, Dhatrod, Dhari, Dahak, daulatabad, Rajkot or Masumabad, Rakhvan, Ranpur, Barwala, Senhor, Barbara, Khontdar, Gondal, Kariardhar, Ghogabara, Kodinar, Kotiana, Lathi, Guliana, Mandvi, Mendarda, Mangrol or Mangalor, Mahupur, Sabhli, Balagam, Kesuj, Morvi, Muhammadnagar or Halvad, Malikpur, and Hastichok.
Islamnagar/ Navanagar	-	-	17	Haveli, Amran, Pardhari, Kalabar, deraya, Khambalia, Marandi, Baniali, Visawara, Dhrol, Raipur or Badh, and Khandolia.

Apart from the above mentioned *sarkars*, there were six (*peshkashi*) tribute paying *sarkars* as well, which belonged to the *zamindars* prior to the conquest of Gujarat by Akbar.[23] After the conquest they were ordered to serve the *nazims* and pay tribute.[24]

Tribute Paying / *Peshkashi Sarkars*

SARKAR	*PARGANAS*
Sulaiman Nagar or Kutch	Bhujnagar, Anjar, Chuyari, Dharka, Mandvi, Sarma, Hariala, Bara, Bijhana, Kuvadra, Pandni, Barbari, Kothari, Narainsar, Talya, Katara, Kanikot, Bandar Sagalo, Bandar Datalodi, Bandar Mundra, Rasmeda, Kathara, Nagri, Sankmut, Sasri, Arma, Godra, Jakki, Kankrala, and Auranga.
Ramnagar	Kadi, Dharsana, Kheralu, Sumi, Sarnal, Vatrak Kantha, Mahikantha, Parkar, Tirwara, and Tharod etc.
Dongarpur	-
Bansballa	-
Sunth	-
Sirohi	-

Towns:

The Official chronicles offer a lucid morphology of the towns of Gujarat. They divide these towns into two categories – big towns and small towns. This classification is based on the size and population of the town or on administrative position.[25] M.P. Singh explains that from the functional point of view, the Mughal town can be divided in various categories: administrative divisions such as imperial/provincial capital, *sarkar* and *Parganas.*[26]

[23] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 224.

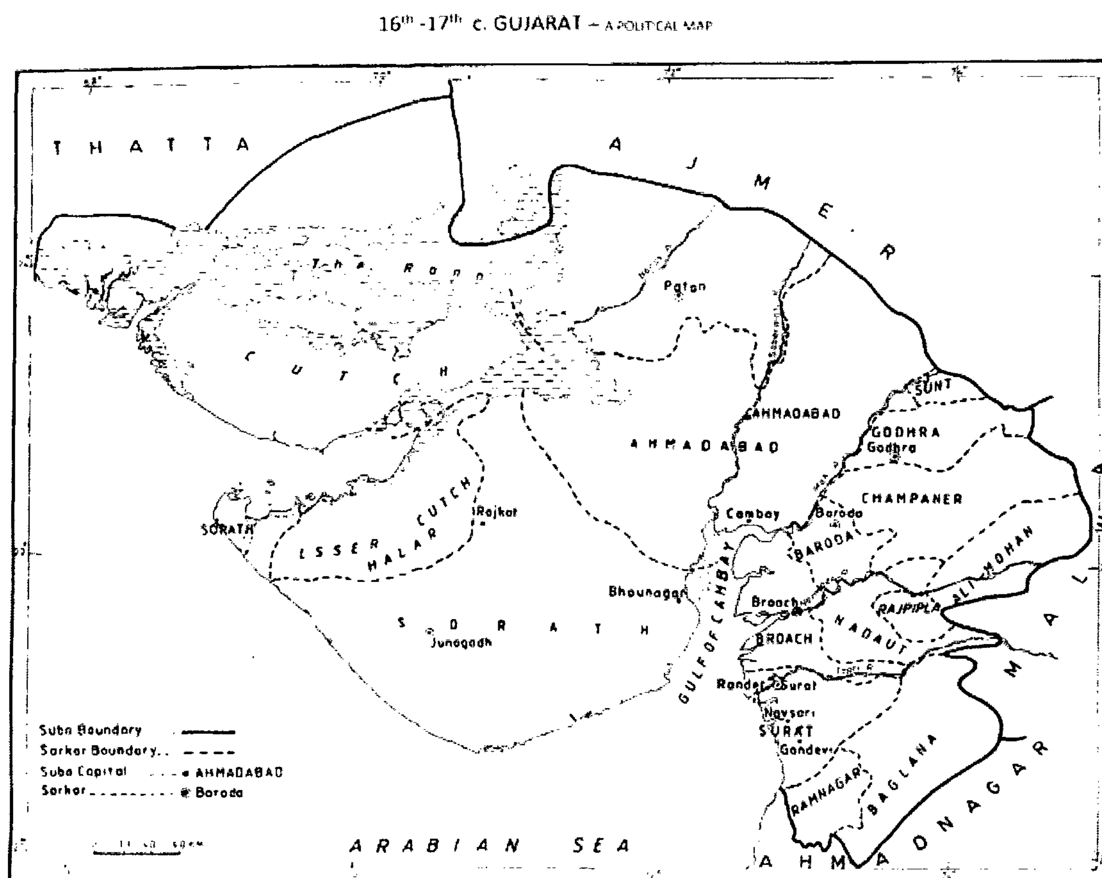
[24] Ibid., p. 225.

[25] Singh, M.P., *Town, Market, Mint and Ports in the Mughal Empire, 1556-1707,* New Delhi, 1985, p. 1.

[26] *Town, Market, Mint and Ports in the Mughal Empire,* op. cit., pp. 2-3.

These were originally meant for administration. Subsequently they became centres of crafts and trade and commerce.[27] Second category was manufacturing towns. The important towns in the province of Gujarat were Ahmadabad, Baroda, Broach, Cambay, Surat, Rander, Nadiad, Mehmudabad, Gandevi, Navsari and Dabhoi etc., the third category comprised towns which developed as commercial and industrial centres first and later on became administrative headquarters.[28]

Map - 2



(based on *Mughal Atlas*)

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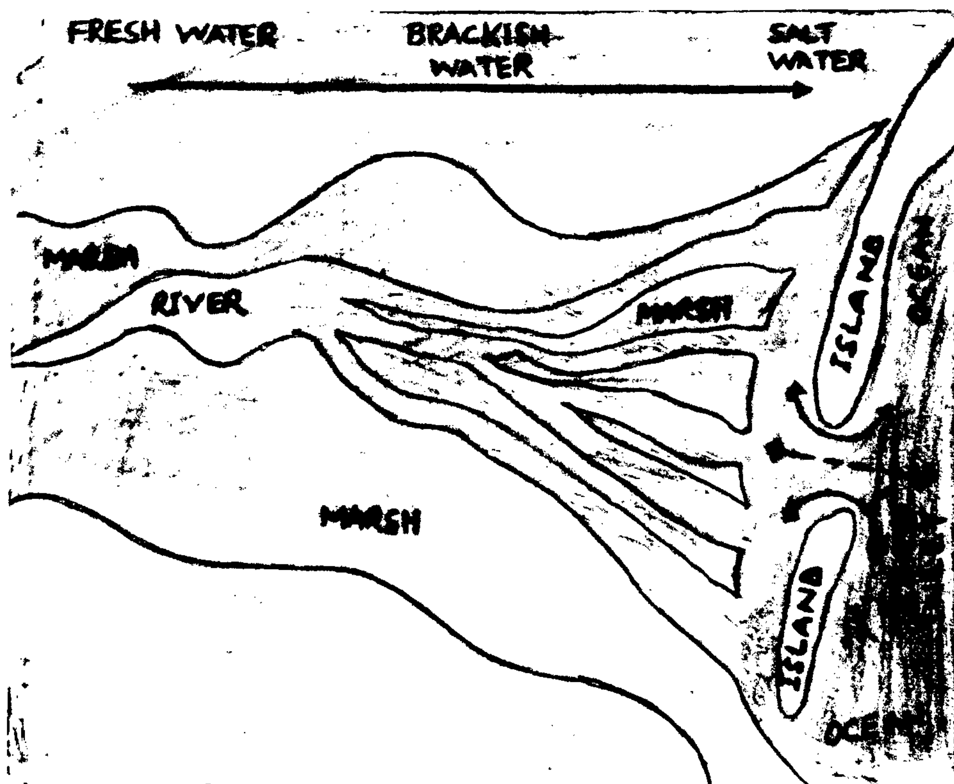
[27] Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, II, Eds. Maulawi Abdur Rahim, Calcutta, 1878, p. 323; also see Thevenot, *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, Eds. S. N. Sen, The National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949, pp. 49-50.

[28] *Town, Market, Mint and Ports in the Mughal Empire*, p. 3.

Ports:

The Sultanate of Gujarat in 1571-72 A.D. contained 23 ports constituted them into 23 revenue divisions/*mahals* and annual Income from them amounted Rs. 38,00,000/-.[29] It was 6.9% of the total revenue of the kingdom.[30] The ports of Surat, Broach, Gogha, Gandhar and Rander annually yielded Rs. 20,00,000/-. Cambay remitted 4,00,000/- and remaining 17 ports paid 14,00,000/- to the treasury of the kingdom.[31]

Major port or *Bandar* had access to the sea, through a harbour[32] or a creek,[33] or an estuary.[34] It was essential to enable ships to approach and cast anchor.[35]



Estuary

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[29] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi,* op. cit., p. 18.

[30] Ibid, pp. 16-17.

[31] Ibid., p. 18.

[32] The term harbour is used for a place of shelter for ships.

[33] Creek implies an inlet on a sea coast.

[34] The term estuary is employed for wide tidal river mouth.

[35] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 239.

There were port towns situated on the west coast of the country. The more important among them were Gogha, Cambay, Broach, Surat, Swally, Rander and Gandhar or Kandhar.[36] According to *Mirat*, the total number of these ports was around twenty seven (see Map-3).

List of ports of sixteenth - seventeenth century Gujarat which flourished in Mughal period[37] :

Bandar or Ports of Gujarat

PORTS	REVENUE (in *dams*)[38]	DUTIES (in *mahmudis*)[39]	*SARKAR*	REMARKS
1. *Khambayat*	22,147,986	-	Ahmadabad	Enter-pot in 16th c.
2. *Una*	7,620,388	15,000	Sorath	
3. *Surat*	5,530,145		Surat	
4. *Korinar*	4,538,560	1,000	Sorath	
5. *Pattan Deo*	4,453,912	25,000	Sorath	
6. *Talaja*	2,435,520	7,000	Sorath	
7. *Gandevi*	835,330	-	Surat	
8. *Dungar*	760,400	1,000	Sorath	
9. *Nagsari*	755,376	10,000	Sorath	
10. *Broach*	456,660	-	Broach	
11. *Gandhar*	240,000	-	Broach	
12. *Mahuwa*	100,290	1,000	Surat	
13. *Rander*	63,692	-	Surat	Enter-pot in 16th c.
14. *Meykor*	-	3,000	-	
15. *Porbandar*	-	27,228	Ahmadabad	
16. *Mangrol*	-	27,000	-	
17. *Gogha*	-	-	Sorath	Invaded by Portuguese in 1614 A.D.
18. *Swally*	-	-	-	

[36] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi'* (Supl.), pp. 239-240; *Ain*, II, pp. 120-121, 122, 123; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 18-19.

[37] *Ain,* II, pp. 120-124; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi'* (Supl.), p. 239.

[38] *Ain*, II, pp. 120-124.

[39] Ibid., p. 124.

19. *Div*	-	-	-	
20. *Daman*	-	-	-	
21. *Salaya*	-	-	-	
22. *Malikapur*	-	-	-	
23. *Veraval*	-	-	-	
24. *Jhaka*	-	-	-	
25. *Beri Bandar*	-	-	-	
26. *Gogola*	-	-	-	
27. *Jhakar*	-	-	-	

The *bara* was connected with the sea through a river. Only small boats had access to it.[40] Basically *bara* was meant for small boats and was called *hodis* in Gujarat.[41] The *baras* were around forty five[42]:

Baras in Gujarat

1. Bara Shahpur	2. Bara Thakaria	3. Bara Bharyad
4. Manji	5. Bhangadh	6. Dolera
7. Undi	8. Jhanjsu	9. Qutbpur
10. Muzaffarabad	11. Kodinar	12. Chohar
13. Ahmadpur	14. Rajpur	15. Kot
16. Bilaval Pattan	17. Chorwar	18. Udhupur
19. Navi	20. Kusa/Chania	21. Bhora
22. Bhar	23. Tajpur	24. Dubari
25. Bhavda	26. Dwarka	27. Badrala
28. Armada	29. Pajpur	30. Nakand
31. Ali Parkar	32. Nareansar	

Cambay[43] and Rander[44] were important enter-pots of sea-borne trade in sixteenth century. Historical significance of Gujarat can be traced from Ancient times. Thriving

[40] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), pp. 239-240.

[41] Ibid.

[42] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), pp. 239-240..

[43] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 239; *Ain*, II, p. 123; Careri, *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, Eds. S. N. Sen, The National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949, p. 164; Barbosa, Duarte, *Book of Barbosa: An Account of The Countries Bordering to The Indian Ocean And Their Inhabitants*, 3 Vols., I, Eds. Mansel Longworth Dames, Indian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1918-21 (Reprint-1982), pp. 138-142.

International trade gave a fillip to the Harappa culture in Gujarat.[45] Indian and foreign accounts say that, from the 3rd century B.C. onwards, Broach emerged as an international port.[46]

Broach: Port of Broach was under the governor (*mutasaddi*) of Surat.[47] It had a fine fort and River Narmada passed through this.[48] *Ain* considers it was the maritime town of first rate importance.[49] Other ports viz. Gandhar, Kavi, Bhabhut and Bhakora were dependent on it.[50] (see Map-3) Decline of Broach is traced to the 8th century when the prestige was taken over by Cambay.[51]

Cambay: Cambay gradually rose under the Chalukya, Solanki and Vaghela rulers between 942 A.D. and 1300 A.D. It was the greatest port under the independent Muslim Sultans of Gujarat.[52] The prosperity of Cambay was due to its outer ports namely, Gandhar and later Gogha, (see Map-3) where ships would anchor for the onwards business of their cargoes to Cambay in light boats. These were termed as *tawaris*.[53].The deposition of large sand banks in Cambay had navigational problems and risk for big Ocean-going ships. Due to this maritime trade became problematic and expensive for merchants. They had to bear the cost of transport of their goods for either import or

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[44] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 239; *Ain*, II, p. 123; Barbosa, I, op. cit., p. 146; *A History of Gujarat*, II, op. cit., pp. 264-265.

[45] Makaranad Mehta observes that – "the first tidal dock of the world is believed to have been built at Lothal. The ports of peninsular Gujarat emerged later, among those Dwarka, Veraval, Porbandar and Mangrol." *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, op. cit., p. 11.; Also see Hasan, Farhat, *State and Locality in Mughal India, Power Relation in Western India, c. 1572-1730*, C.U.P., Cambridge, 2004, p. 9.

[46] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 11.

[47] *Mutasaddi* was the chief administrator of the port. This designation meant merely a petty officer or a clerk. But in special context he was appointed to administer the ports, such as Surat, Cambay etc. He was directly appointed by the Imperial court. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 239.

[48] *Ain*, II, p. 116.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 12.

[52] Ibid.

[53] *Ain*, II, p. 116.

export.[54] Cambay had a close proximity to Ahmadabad, which was an important centre of commercial and manufacturing activities during the period. The difficulty with Cambay was that it did not have good harbour of its own. It presented a number of navigational hazards to approaching vessels,[55] and this necessitated the use of Gogha on the Kathiawar coast for serving as anchorage.[56] These were the main causes for decline of Cambay. As Cambay began to decay, Surat emerged as an international port, and efforts of Mughals in the development of the region also supported prosperity of Surat.[57]

The presence of Portuguese on the coastal region of western India and Indian Ocean changed the course of Gujarat's maritime trade. The merchants of Cambay were forced to buy *cartaz*[58] from the Portuguese, even to trade with the coastal regions. According to Ruby Maloni "The foundation of this practise was the sale of protection."[59] The advent of the European merchants as a dominant business group on the Indian Ocean in seventeenth century added a fresh dimension in India's pattern of trade.[60]

Gogha: Gogha emerged as a new flourishing port because of its excellent harbours.[61] After the beginning of the 15th century, Gogha continued to flourish under the governor

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[54] *State and Locality in Mughal India,* op. cit., pp. 9-10; *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

[55] Hawkins, *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Eds. William Foster, Low Price Publication, Delhi, 2007 (reprint), pp. 62-63; Thevenot, pp. 18-19; Careri, p. 164; Barbosa, I, pp. 138-139; Valle, Pietro Della, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, 2 Vols., I, Eds. Edward Grey, Haklyut Society, London, 1892, pp. 17, 63-65.

[56] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 194; *Ain*, II, p. 116; Hawkins, *Early Travels*, op. cit., pp. 62-63; Ovington, op. cit., p. 131.

[57] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, pp. 13, 91.

[58] All trading ships in Asia were required to have cartazes. It was a kind of permission letter. Under this system, all ships passing through Portuguese territories had to buy permits or passes, it was compulsory for those vessels sailing to Goa from any part of the country otherwise ships were captured. A cartaz was valid for one year. Maloni, Ruby, 'Control of the Seas: The Historical Exegesis of the Portuguese *Cartaz*', P.I.H.C., 72nd session, Patiala, 2011, p. 476; Also see Mathew, K. M., *History of the Portuguese Navigation in India (1497-1600)*, Delhi, 1987, p. 133.

[59] 'Control of the Seas: The Historical Exegesis of the Portuguese *Cartaz*', op. cit., p. 476.

[60] Mehta, Makarand, *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, Delhi, 1991, p. 21.

[61] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 12.

of Gujarat Sultanate. In 1513 A.D., it was a big town with an important port dealing in all kind of merchandise. Ships were loaded here for Malabar, Aden, Muscat, Persian Gulf and Zanzibar in east Africa.[62] This port was almost destroyed by Portuguese when they attacked and set it ablaze in 1531 A.D. They again attacked in 1546 A.D. and 1614 A.D. This time it was under the Mughal Empire. Portuguese invaded it and set fire to 120 boats and some ships, including famous *Rahimi* (a magnificent ship of 1500 tons), when it was carrying a large number of Muslim pilgrimage to Macca.

The importance of Gogha can be imagined from the fact that Mughal governors reconstructed the port and improved the harbour. Akbar also re-organised the custom department, appointing skilled officials, clerks and accountants.[63] Ain also mentions its importance and says that it was an important port town of Sorath *sarkar*, and this *sarkar* yielded annual revenue of 666,560 *dams*.[64] This was the period when Surat emerged as a significant port on western coast. Gogha continued to enjoy glory due to the mercantile communities of Jain, Hindu Bohra and Khoja. Makarand Mehta believes that there existed considerable coordination among the ruling elite, custom officials, merchants and artisans.[65]

Surat: None of the travellers before the sixteenth century mention Surat as a centre of international commerce. By the end of this century, Cambay and Rander (on the north bank of river Tapi) were declining.[66] Sixteenth century was the period when English, Dutch and other European companies started to approach India and started their factories in Surat. It was one of the reasons that Surat ultimately replaced Rander[67] and excelled Cambay. Port of Diu was in the race for some time, with Surat to displace Cambay from its position. But Portuguese seized Diu in 1536 A.D. It seems that Diu was lost to Surat[68]

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[62] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 43.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ain, II, pp. 123-124.

[65] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 44.

[66] Ibid., p. 92.

[67] *A History of Gujarat*, II, op. cit., p. 266; Also see Barbosa, I, p. 148; *The Portuguese in India*, I, op. cit., p. 399.

[68] *State and Locality in Mughal India*, p.10.

The Mughal attitude towards Indian ports was very encouraging. Satish Chandra observes that the members of the royal family regularly participated in the sea borne commercial activities, especially to the Red Sea ports, and also to some extent with the ports to the south of Surat and ports on the east coast of Africa.[69] This was reflected in a favourable balance of Surat's maritime commerce with the European and Asian countries during the seventeenth century.[70] In seventeenth century, Jahangir, Nur Jahan, Prince Khurram and Queen mother owned ships which plied between Surat and Red Sea region. Ships of Prince Khurram carried on an extensive trade with Mocha. His ships were also busy in trade with Masulipatanam.[71] In 1621 A.D., English Factory at Cambay contracted with a broker of Prince for the supply of goods to Mocha.[72] Mughal Emperor acknowledged the importance of European merchants who exported bullion to the Surat port. Hence they gave them concessions at the Surat port and free transit duties from Surat to other Indian ports.[73]

Surat occupied a pivotal position in the Gulf of Cambay,[74] and also had a safe road.[75] It was comparatively safe from Portuguese pirates as compared to Gogha.[76] M.P. Singh rates it the best route from the Gulf of Cambay to Agra and Delhi.[77]

By the beginning of eighteenth century Surat began to decline. A large number of merchants of Surat, Saurashtra and Kutch started migration towards Bombay.[78] Surat became so rich and when Shivaji sacked it in 1664 A.D. and in 1670 A.D., a delegation under influential merchants – Virji Vora, Haji Zahid Beg and Jahan Beg, and some high

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[69] Chandra Satish, 'Commercial Activities of the Mughal Emperors during the seventeenth century', *Medieval India*, Eds. Satish Chandra, New Delhi, 1982, p. 153.

[70] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 92.

[71] 'Commercial Activities of the Mughal Emperors during the seventeenth century', *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[72] *EFI*, 1622-23, pp. 148, 149, 152, 168.

[73] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 92.

[74] Foster, William, *Letter Received by East India Company From its Servants in the East*, 6 Vols., I, London, 1897, pp. 238, 258, 300; *Letter Received*, IV, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

[75] *Letter Received*, I, pp. 280, 283-285, 300-301; Hawkins, *Early Travels*, pp. 62-63.

[76] Foster, William, and Fawcett, Sir Charles, *English Factories in India*, (old and new series, Oxford, 1913 and 1956), 1618-21, p. 13; *Letter Received*, IV, p. 152.

[77] Singh, M.P., 'The Custom House at the Port of Cambay', *Studies in Islam*, Jan.-Oct., 1971, pp. 132-133.

[78] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 13.

officials met Aurangzeb to seek permission of fortification of the city. Emperor granted permission for the construction of a fort.[79]

After a regular time interval trade centres were replaced by another, if one town or port declined other one emerged as a new centre of trade and commerce. But trade and business never stopped or even effected. Makarand Mehta terms this phenomenon as 'business culture',[80] and this culture was reflected mainly during the Mughal period in the following highlights:[81]

- Availability of enough surpluses in agriculture to support mercantile and other activities.
- Presence of urbanized commercial and manufacturing centres.
- Framework of merchants' institutions..
- Political stability.
- Connected trade routes from other parts of the country.
- Availability of ports for international trade.
- Large number of skilled artisans, craftsmen and merchants in urban centres and in rural areas.
- A sizeable number of merchants and entrepreneurs holding merchants capital.

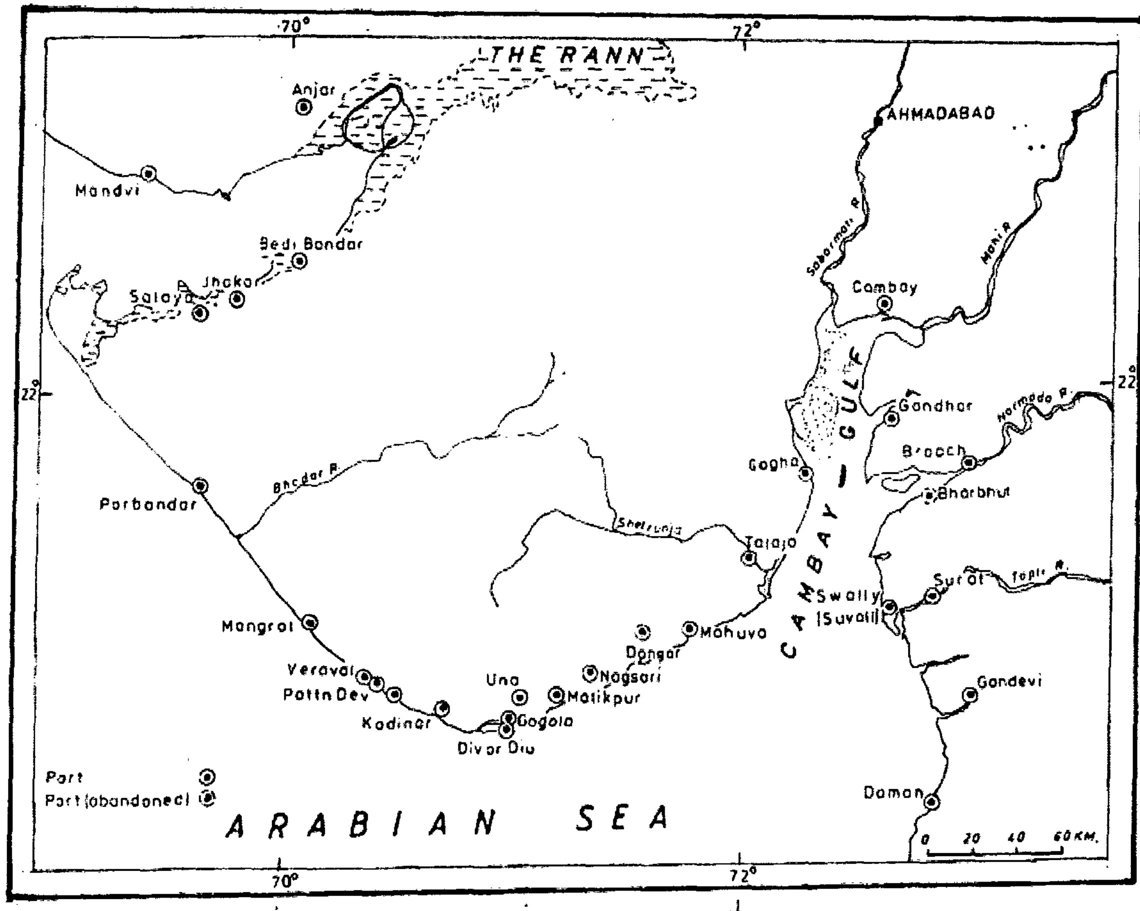
[79] Shankar, Narmada, *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, Union Press, Mumbai, 1866, pp. 1-2; *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p.92.

[80] *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, pp. 11-12.

[81] Ibid., p. 12.

Map - 3

PORTS OF GUJARAT (16^{th} – 17^{th} c.)



(based on *Mughal Atlas*)

Trade Routes:

Being a hub of trade, industry and mercantile activities, it is quite obvious that Gujarat was well-linked with other trade centres and industrial towns of the country as well as other countries. Towns within the region of Gujarat were also well connected through roads and rivers. Travellers in medieval India traversed across Gujarat and recorded rich information about the routes in their accounts.

Overseas Routes: During sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, Cambay was the main port for international trade. It was connected with the ports of Eastern Africa.[82] Barbosa gives names of ports of east Africa, such as Kilwa, Mombasa and Malindi, which were involved in trade with the port of Cambay.[83] (see Map-4) Gujarat had its trade relations with the region of Red Sea during this time. Barbosa witnessed Gujarati ships at Cape of Guardafui and the port of Berbera.[84]

Gujarat's most important trade route was that linking with Aden and Malacca via her own great ports. As the most acute contemporary observer Pires graphically expresses "Cambay chiefly stretches out two arms, with her right arm she reaches out towards Aden and with the other towards Malacca, as the most important places to sail to, and the other places are held to be of less importance."[85]

Surendra Gopal believes that Aden was the vital transhipment point for India and Gujarati goods to the Mediterranean basin.[86]

A south Arabian port *Shahr* was also involved in the trade with Cambay.[87] (see Map-4) In the Persian Gulf region, the island of Hormuz (belonged to Iran), was the main centre of maritime trade and received commodities from India.[88] Gujarat had good relations with Persia at the turn of sixteenth century.

The English noted Gujarati traders' presence in the islands of Socotra, Delisha Road, kingdom of Tamarine (main town of Socotra), Berbera, Djibuti, Aden, Assab, Mocha, islands of Dahlak and Suakin, Jiddah and Sahr.[89] Sahr, Aden, Jiddah and Mocha were principal ports for the southern and western coast of Arabia.[90] Mocha was connected with Surat, Broach, Gogha and Diu.[91] Fortunately enough Gujarati traders

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[82] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, op. cit., p. 2.

[83] Barbosa, I, pp. 7-8.

[84] Ibid., p. 33.

[85] Pires, Tome, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, 2 Vols., I, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1990, p. 42.

[86] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, cit., p. 3.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] *EFI*, 1618-21, pp. 56; *Letter Received*, I, pp. 179, 31; *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 22.

[90] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 22.

[91] Letter *Received* V, p. 164; *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 22.

had connections with Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia in Africa.[92] Diu had some connections with the ports of Ethiopia.[93]

Surat had commercial linkage with an Iranian port by the name Jask. Money could be counted from Jask to Surat by bills of exchange.[94] Small ships journeyed annually from Cambay, Broach and Surat to Iran.[95] Surat had the advantage of being midway of Indonesia (the spice island) and Persia, Arabia and Red Sea region.[96] So it was quite comfortable place for the traders to import and export their goods to and from these countries.

Guajarati traders were also very active in Asian countries, such as Japan, China and Indonesia etc. They had mutual dealings with Patani (Thailand) and Bantam (Java).[97] Gogha and Cambay had brisk trade with Burma. Gujarati merchants regularly sent a ship loaded with textiles every year to Thailand or Siam.[98]

According to Makarand Mehta, Gogha was directly connected with Surat, Muscat, Zanzibar and Malabar Coast.[99] There is a proverb in Gogha:

"લંકાની લાડી અને ઘોઘાનો વર"

means a marriage of a girl from Lanka with a boy of Gogha. On the basis of this proverb, Makarand Mehta believes that Gogha had some trade links with Sri Lanka as well.[100] Barbosa's eye witness account confirms the view of Makarand Mehta, he says Gujarati ships regularly sailed to the island of Ceylon and Colombo was the main trade centre.[101]

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[92] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 22.

[93] Ibid., p. 29.

[94] Letter Received, VI, p. 64.

[95] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. p. 45.

[96] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 95.

[97] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, pp. 53, 6.

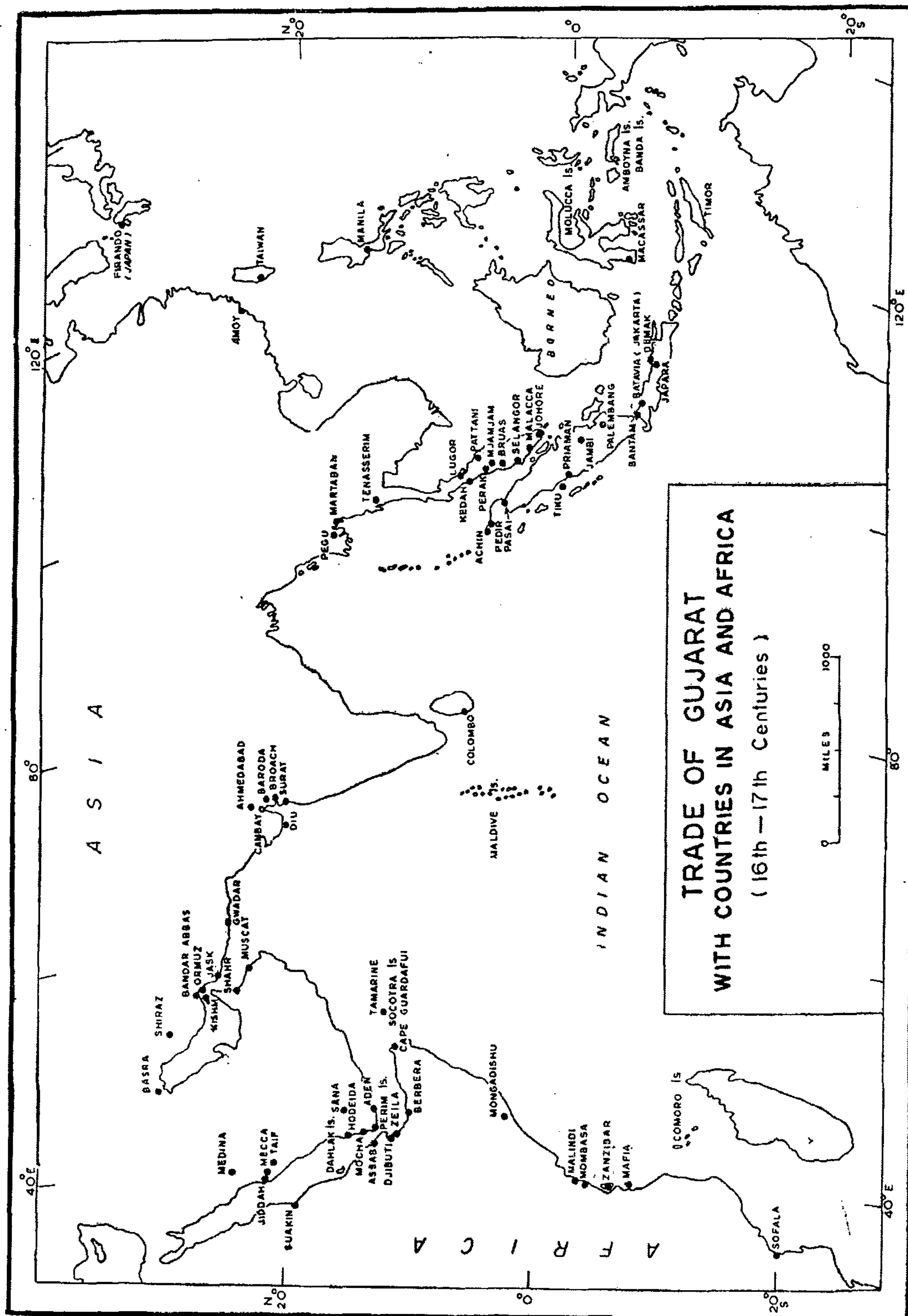
[98] Barbosa, II, p. 156; Pires, I, op. cit., p. 107.

[99] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 44.

[100] Ibid., p. 44.

[101] Barbosa, I, pp. 117, 118; Barbosa, II, pp. 113-117.

Map - 4



(source: *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat*)

Inland Routes: Ahmadabad was important due to its location on major trade-routes. It was linked with port-towns and principal commercial centres. Withington has mentioned in his account, a route from Ahmadabad to Thatta, and when he was going through this route, he saw and halted for some time in Radhanpur and Nagar Parkar.[102]

Ahmadabad → Radhanpur → Nagar Parkar → Thatta

Another important route was from Ahmadabad to Ajmer.[103] This route was linked with Surat and Broach in the south Gujarat, and Lahore, Multan and Kabul in north-west. Makarand Mehta observes that Surat was connected with both rural and urban centres of Mughal India.[104] He gives details of two roads[105]:

Surat → Broach → Ahmadabad → Ajmer → Lahore → Multan → Kabul

Surat → Burhanpur → Agra → Delhi

A route between Broach and Surat was mentioned by Withington, Thevenot and Peter Mundi.[106] (see Map-5) Route between Broach and Ahmadabad was called the main route by Tavernier and this same route was also explained by some other travellers.[107] Route from Surat to Burhanpur was also given by some European travellers.[108] Surat was also linked with Aurangabad.[109] Surat was well connected with

[102] Withington, op. cit., pp. 208-210.

[103] Tavernier, I, op. cit., pp. 80-81; Mundi, Peter, *The Travels of Peter Mundi in Europe and Asia-1608-1667*, 2 Vols., II, Hakluyt Society, London, 1914, pp. 260-266.

[104] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 95.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Withington, p. 205; Thevenot, op. cit., pp. 8-9; Mundi, II, op. cit., p. 272.

[107] Tavernier, I, pp. 68, 71-72; Withington, pp. 205-206; Mundi, II, pp. 268-271.

[108] William Finch, *Early Travels*, op. cit., pp. 133-37; Mundi, II, pp. 39-47; Tavernier, I, pp. 48-50; Thevenot, p. 102.

[109] Tavernier, I, pp. 142-143; Thevenot, pp. 102-104.

the production centres within the boundaries of Gujarat, such as Navsari, Gandevi, Broach, Baroda, Cambay, Nadiad and Ahmadabad.[110]

William Finch entails a description of a route in his account, when he starts his journey from Modera to Surat. He found Bhinmal, Radhanpur, Ahmadabad and Broach etc.[111]

Modera → Bhinmal → Radhanpur → Ahmadabad → Sarkhej → Jambusar → Broach → Variav → Surat

A route between Cambay and Ahmadabad is given by Thevenot and Withington.[112] According to Withington it was as follows:

Cambay → Sojitara → Sarkhej → Ahmadabad

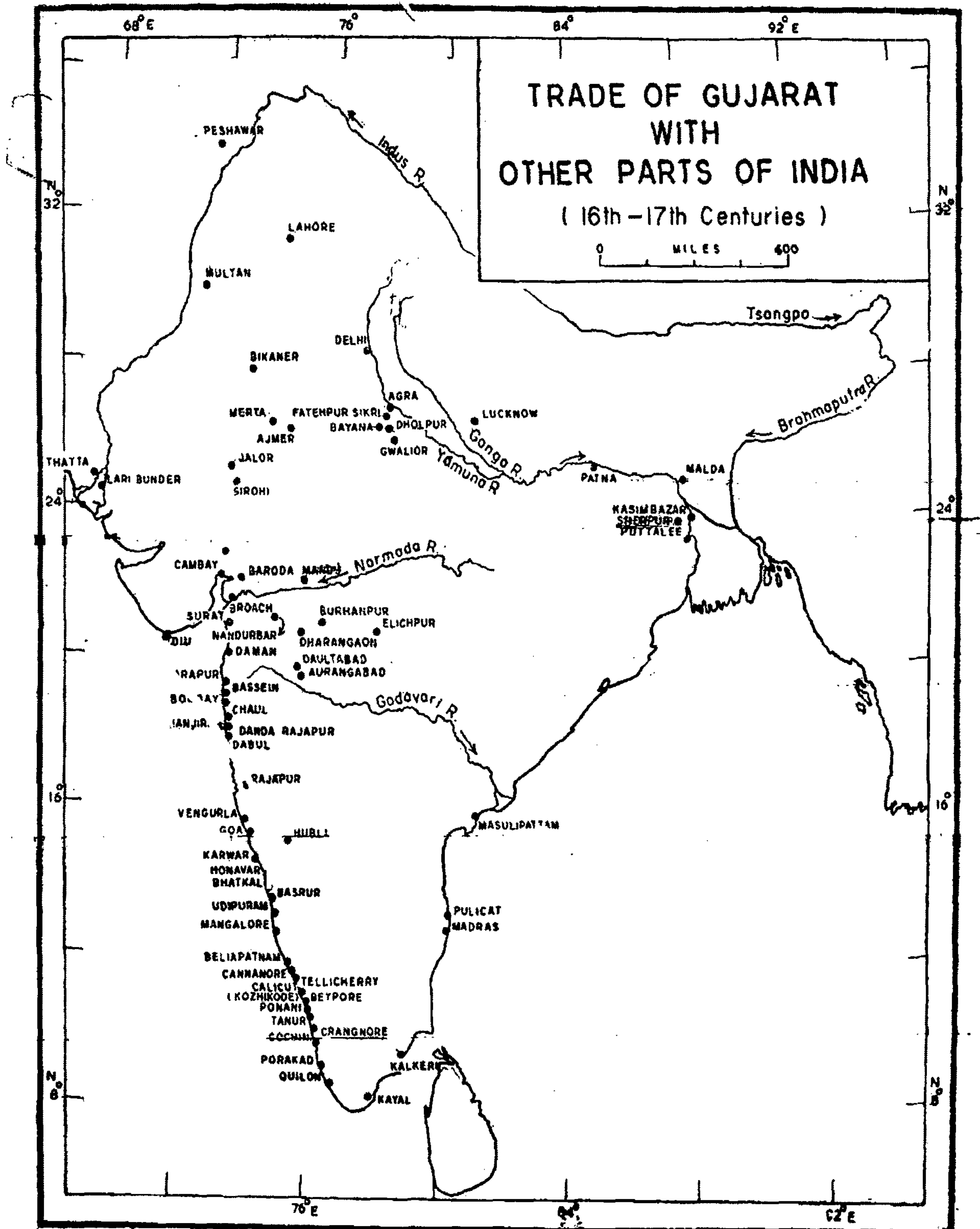
There was a big contribution of these trading routes in the commercial career of Mughal Gujarat. This region was predominant in inland trade and represented Indian sub-continent to faraway countries.

[110] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 95.

[111] Finch, pp. 173-174.

[112] Withington, pp. 206-207; Thevenot, p. 17.

Map - 5



(source: *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat*)

Trade and Industry:

The arrival of European companies and increasing demand for Indian manufacturing for products like cotton, cloth, raw silk and variety of silk textile in European market and in Asian countries, was perhaps the important cause for the growth of some of the towns that became manufacturing centres. It is very interesting to note that the majority of people in different towns were weaver, especially in Baroda and Broach.[113]

Broach was famous for its shipbuilding industry,[114] fine quality *baftas*[115] calicos, *chintz*[116] and silk products.[117] The quality of *bafta* of Broach was finer than any textile made in the province of Gujarat.[118] Broach was also famous for its dyeing and bleaching industry, so that many merchants of different parts of the country sent their textiles products here for further processing.[119]

Pattan known for its *patola* silk saris[120], *qatani* silk, *dupattas*[121] and also famous for its cotton textiles, Thevenot says that there was abundance of silk stuffs.[122]

Ahmadabad was famous for its *makhmal*[123] (velvet), *kimkhwab*[124] (flowered silk), *zarbaft*[125] (silk brocades with gold and silver thread), gold and silver embroidery,[126] carpets with gold and silver thread,[127] chintz, calico, quilts,[128] inlay work,[129] carving,[130]

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[113] *EFI*, 1630-32, op. cit., p. 22; Hamilton, Capt. Alexender, *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, 2 Vols., I, London, 1739 (Reprint- New Delhi, 1995), pp. 314-315.

[114] *EFI*, 1622-23, p. 310.

[115] Finch, p. 175; *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 124; *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 64; *EFI*, 1642-45, p. 204; Commissariat, M.S., *Mandelslo's Travels in Western India*, Oxford, 1931, p. 15; Thevenot, p. 9.

[116] *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 95; Careri, p. 164.

[117] *EFI*, 1668-69, p. 194.

[118] Mandelslo, p. 15.

[119] *State and Locality in Mughal India*, p. 9.

[120] *EFI*, 1618-21, pp. 101-102; *EFI*, 1646-50, p. 161.

[121] Thevenot, p. 45.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Mandelslo, p. 27; Thevenot, p. 17; Careri, p. 164.

[124] Careri, pp. 163-164; Manucci, II, p. 425.

[125] Mandelslo, pp. 26-27; Careri, pp. 163-164; Manucci, II, p. 425.

[126] Finch, p. 173.

[127] Mandelslo, p. 27; Thevenot, p. 17.

and paper industry[131] and cotton cloths, gold tissue, *chirah* (coloured turban), *fotah, jamawar* (flowered woollen stuff), velvet, brocade, silk cloth and *khara* (undulated silk).[132] Paper industry in Ahmadabad was mostly patronised by Bohras[133] Ahmadabad was also an important centre for brass, copper and bell metal wares.[134]

Surat earned identity in shipbuilding industry,[135] cotton textiles, especially narrow *bafta,*[136] and silk.[137] Sobay, a town near Surat was famous for calico.[138] The shipbuilding was owned primarily by a small number of Muslim merchants of the city, but some Hindu merchants of Surat also owned ships and deployed them on the Red Sea. About 20 ships sailed from Surat to Mocha and Jeddah carried pilgrims for the *haj* as well as the annual trade of much of northern and western India.[139]

Cambay had ivory-carving industry,[140] cornelian and agate carving,[141] and *patola* silk.[142] Cambay was also famous for quilts, carpets and canvas.[143] Excellent breed of horses (believed to be Arabian race) were found there in Kutch.[144] Camels and goats of good quality were also found there.[145] A Russain traveller Athanasius Nikitin of 15th century talks about indigo production in Cambay.[146] Gold , ivory, textiles, cotton

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[128] *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 124; *EFI*, 1642-45, pp. 204-205; *EFI*, 1646-50, pp. 160-161.

[129] Finch, p. 173; Manucci, II, p. 425.

[130] Finch, p. 173.

[131] *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 76; *EFI*, 1668-69, p. 221.

[132] *Ain*, II, p. 114; *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 200.

[133] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, pp. 136-37.

[134] Verma, Tripta *Karkhanas Under the Mughals, from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, Delhi, 1994, p. 106.

[135] *EFI*, 1622-23, p. 310; *EFI*, 1642-45, p. 25; Fryer, I, pp. 299, 302; Ovington, p. 166.

[136] *EFI*, 1642-45, p. 204.

[137] *EFI*, 1668-69, p. 194; Tavernier, II, p. 3.

[138] *EFI*, 1622-23, pp. 99-100.

[139] Gupta, Ashin Das, 'Gujarati Merchants and the Red Sea Trade', *The Age of Partnership: Europeans in Asia Before Dominian*, Eds. B.B. Kling and M.N. Pearson, University of Huwaii Press, 1979, p.128.

[140] Thevenot, p. 18.

[141] Thevenot, p. 18; Careri, p. 164; Mandelslo, p. 15.

[142] *EFI*, 1646-50, p. 161.

[143] *Letter Received*, III, p. 32.

[144] *Ain*, II, p. 119.

[145] Ibid.

[146] *The Commercial Products of India*, Eds. Sir George Watt, New Delhi, 1966, p. 664.

clothes (white, blue and spotted), silks, spices, small and colourful beads exported to east African ports – Mombasa, Malindi, Mogadishu and Kilwa from the port of Cambay,[147] and Gujarati merchants took home ivory and gold from there.[148] Gujarati traders used to send textiles, spices and beads to Jeddah as well and imported opium, copper, mercury, vermilion, gold coin and ingots, woollen textiles, rose water from there. Region of Red Sea also exported Slaves to Cambay.[149] Gujarati merchants sent textiles, rice, sugar and spices to Aden[150] and Hormuz too, and the traders of Hormuz came to Cambay with horses, gold, silver, alum, copper, vitriol, pearl and silk.[151] Cambay was an important centre for the export of Malaccan items to Aden and Hormuz.[152] Gujarat's main imports from the east African coast, Red Sea and Persian Gulf were gold, ivory, precious stones, pearls an metals.[153]

In the south-east Asia, Gujarati ships also sailed to the island of Sri Lanka with fine cotton and imports mostly elephants and cinnamon. Colombo was the chief centre of this trade.[154] From the Burmese ports they imported silver, precious stones, high quality lac, elephants, rubies and articles of Malaccan origin.[155] Gujarati merchants sent textiles to Thailand as well.[156]

In the first quarter of seventeenth century English exported 500 bags of rice to Bandar Abbas for sale.[157] Tobacco and cotton-wool were exported to Iran.[158] For the first time Gujarat sent coffee of Arabian origin to Iran.[159] During the seventeenth century Cambay cloths were sent to Patani (Thailand) and Mochian in Asia.[160]

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[147] Barbosa, I, pp. 7-8, 20-23, 31.

[148] Ibid., I, p. 11.

[149] Pires, I, pp. 14, 16, 16-17, 55-56.

[150] Barbosa, I, p. 64.

[151] Pires, I, pp. 44-45.

[152] Barbosa, I, p. 67.

[153] *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat*, p. 5.

[154] Barbosa, I, p. 18; Barbosa, II, p. 117.

[155] Ibid., II, pp. 154, 156; Pires, I, p. 101.

[156] Pires, I, p. 107; Barbosa, II, p. 164.

[157] *EFI*, 1624-29, pp. 305, 307.

[158] Ibid., 1624-29, p. 300.

[159] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 187; *EFI*, 1637-41, p. 309.

[160] *Letter Received*, II, p. 5.

In Moluccas the Gujarati goods were exchanged for cloves and pepper.[161] Gujarati merchants mainly imported dry fruits, carpets, pearls and horses etc.[162] Surat imported rose water, pickles and *runa* (a kind of colouring material) from Iran. There was a keen rivalry between English and Gujarati merchants for *runa*. The English also brought horses from Iran.[163]

Navsari was famous for its shipbuilding industry,[164] *baftas*,[165] and perfumed oils.[166] Gandevi was also famous for shipbuilding[167] and cotton stuff.[168] Sarkhej was famous for its good quality indigo and exported to Turkey and other countries.[169] A large village named Jambusar[170] was famous for its great production of indigo.[171] In seventeenth century indigo became an important item of export from Gujarat.[172] In 1630s Gujarati traders started exporting indigo, sugar, myrabolam and ginger to Iran.[173] Trade in indigo was mainly carried by Gujarati and Armenians.[174] Dabhoi, a town 15 miles away from Baroda, was famous for cotton cloths.[175]

Perfume industry had a domestic market and flourished in Champaner,[176] Ahmadabad, Surat, Sironj and Navsari.[177]

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[161] *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat*, p. 54.

[162] *EFI*, 1637-41, p. 37.

[163] Ibid., 1624-29, p. 300.

[164] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 136.

[165] Finch, p. 134; *EFI*, 1637-41, pp. 277-278.

[166] *Ain*, II, p.122.

[167] *EFI*, 1622-23, p. 310; *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 136.

[168] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 277.

[169] *Ain*, II, p. 115.

[170] Jambusar was 22 miles away from the Broach and lies on the way between Broach and Cambay.

[171] Mandelslo, p. 15.

[172] *EFI*, 1624-29, p. 38.

[173] Ibid., 1624-29, p. 292; *EFI*, 1630-33, pp. 20, 61, 91.

[174] Ibid., 1624-29, p. 307.

[175] Ibid., 1622-23, pp. 99-100.

[176] *Ain*, II, p. 122.

[177] *Ain*, II, p. 123; Also see *Karkhanas under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb: A History in Economic Development*, op. cit., p. 107.

Products and Industries

Area	Product / Industry	Source
Ahmadabad	Makhmal, Kimkhwab, Zarbaft, Gol and Silver embroidery, Carpets with golden and silver threads, Chintz, Calico, Quilts, Inlay work, Carving, Paper, Cotton cloth, Gold tissue, Chirah, Fotah, Jamawar, Brocarde, Silk cloth, Khara	Mandelslo, Thevenot, Careri, Manucci, Finch, EFI, Pearson, Abul Fazl.
Surat	Shipbuilding, Cotton textile, Bafta, Silk, Calico	EFI, Fryer, Ovington, Tavernier
Cambay	Ivory, Cornelian, Agate, Patola Silk, Quilts, Carpets, Canvas, Horses, Camels, Goats, indigo, Gold, Spices, Colourful Beads	Thevenot, Careri, Mandelslo, EFI, Letter Received, Abul Fazl
Broach	Shipbuilding, Baftas, Calico, Chintz, Silk	EFI, Mandelslo, Finch, Thevenot, Careri
Pattan	Patola silk saris, Qatani silk, Dupattas, Cotton textile	Thevenot, EFI
Navsari	Shipbuilding, Baftas, Perfumed oil, Perfumes	EFI, Finch, Abul Fazl
Sarkhej	Indigo, Shipbuilding, Cotton	EFI, Abul Fazl

Cities had their own identity and do not have direct concern with agriculture. But a city cannot run self-sufficiently without the support of agricultural rural areas. So

agriculture also played its role in Gujarat. Its main agriculture products were as follows[178]:

Agriculture Production

Product	Place
Jowar	Sorath
Bajra	Kutch, Islamnagar/Navanagar
Rice	Islamnagar/Navanagar (high quality *kamod* rice) Rajpipla (high quality) Navapur (high quality – scented and high quality – ordinary both) Broach, Surat (ordinary)
Wheat	Sorath, Broach, Surat
Barley	Broach
Sugarcane	Surat, Baglana
Cotton	Kutch, Mehmudabad, Broach (best quality)
Indigo	Sarkhej, Dholka, Cambay, Nadiad, Jambusar

***Puras* and Buildings:**

When Ahmadabad became new capital of the Sultanate of Gujarat, it was not so populated. Their nobles used to select plots for their palaces, and houses of their attendants were built by the side of the city. These noblemen generally preferred to live at a safe distance, so they could develop their own settlements. The whole block was called a *pura.*[179] The *puras* came into existence when the population of the town increased so as to leave no space within the city for further enlargement. Certain rich men got their houses built outside the wall.[180]

These *puras* were named after the noble founder's name, such as Tajpura, Jamalpura etc. Sometimes they had the suffix *ganj* instead of *pura*, like Noorganj,

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[178] Habib, Irfan, *Mughal Atlas,* O.U.P., p. 26.

[179] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 12.

[180] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

Muradganj etc. It is said that there were around 360 or 380 *puras*.[181] But in 16[th]-seventeenth century there were only 84 *puras* flourishing.[182] These *puras* were like a city. Each *pura* had a big stone mosque. *Mirat* mentions from an earlier book *Tazkirat-ul-Mulka* that Usmanpura (in Ahmadabad) had at least 1000 shops and in all these shops there were traders, artisans, craftsmen, government servants and military people of both the religions - Hindu and Muslim.[183] *Ain* says that each *pura* had essential requisites of a city.[184] Though a *pura* had all the requisites of the city life, yet, without the mother town it had no identity of its own.[185] The merchants, artisans, and workmen also built their houses there and contributed to make the *pura* a thriving centre of commerce and manufacturers.[186]

According to *Ain*, there were 360 *puras* in Ahmadabad, which were the quarters of special kind, in which all the requisites of a city were to be found. However, only 84 of these were flourishing at the time of Abul Fazl.[187] Thevenot also gives some name of *puras* of Ahmadabad[188] Ovington informs that there was a suburb in Surat called *Pulpura*, it was exclusively peopled by *fakirs*.[189]

Puras / Suburbs

TOWN	*PURAS*
	Shahpura/Qazipur, Hajipur, Daryapur, Multanpur, Maqsudpur, Mahpur, Sherpur, Lodhipur, Panahpur, Jahangirpur, Sikandarpur/Haibatpur, Haripur, Bibipur, Harharpur, Ruppur, Kalupur, Rasulpur, Ghalipur, Saraspur, Nurullapur, Khimpur, Nasimpur, Parampur, Sarangpur, Afzalpur, Beganpur, Tughanpur, Gomtipur, Kansiwara, Lalpur, Sirkuwara, Moazampur, Sultanpur, Ganjpur, Nawapura, Manjhanpur, Kishorpur, Masumpur, Muradganj, Jamnapur, Nanipur, Seyyidpur,

181 *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 11.

182 *Ain*, II, p. 115.

183 *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), pp. 12-13.

184 *Ain*, II, p. 115.

185 *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 12.

186 Ibid., pp. 11-12.

187 *Ain*. II, p. 115.

188 Thevenot, p. 11.

189 Ovington, p. 210.

Ahmadabad	Changezpur, Likupur, Bahadurganj, Akrampur, Mufakhirpur, Pirpur, Alimpur, Farrukhpur, Nurganj, Zorawarpur, Khamandrolpur, Eranpur, Hasanpur, Mehmudpur, Isanpur, Khudabandpur, Qutbpura, Qasimpur, Rajupur, Khanpur (these *puras* were situated on the south of river *Sabarmati*).[190] Usmanpura, Khanpur, Abdulpur, Ferozpur, Azdarpur, Salabatpur, Sharqpur, Shadmanpur, Emadulpur, Faridabad, Shaikhpur, Sultanpur, Kamaluddinpur, Isapur, Rahimpur, Miranpur (these were situated on the north of river *sabarmati.*)[191]
Surat	Chokbazar, Mulla Chaklo, Gopipura, Sonichakla, Sanghadiavad and Pulpura etc.[192]

Besides the *puras* towns also had huge buildings that always sought attention of the people. City of Ahmadabad was situated on the banks of river Sabarmati, had a high state of prosperity. *Ain* records the pleasant climate and unrivalled popularity of products.[193] It had two forts and outside these forts there were *puras,* each had all requisite of the city. These *puras* had around 1000 stone mosques and each mosque had 2 minarets and some rare inscriptions.[194] In Rasulabad *pura*, there was a tomb of Shah Alam Bokhari and his father's (Qutb-i-Alam) tomb was at the village Batwah or Patwah, 3 *kos* from Ahmadabad. Some other tombs were also there in Batwah, in the vicinity of beautiful gardens.[195] There were 12 *bhagals*[196] or gates in Ahmadabad in all the directions:

North – Shahpur *bhagal*, Idaria or Dilli *bhagal*, Daryapur *bhagal.*

South – Jamalpur or Dhedia *bhagal,* Raipur *bhagal.*

East – Sarangpur *bhagal,* Kalupur *bhagal,* Astidia *bhagal.*

[190] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*' (Supl.), p. 12-18.

[191] Ibid., p. 16-17.

[192] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 94.

[193] *Ain*, II, p. 114.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Ibid., pp. 115.

[196] Gates situated outside the town were called *bhagals* in Gujarat.

West – Khanpur *bhagal,* Raikhar *bhagal,* Khanjahan *bhagal* (on the bank of Sabarmati).

English factory at Ahmadabad was in the middle of the city. It was well built and had many fine apartments and spacious courts for the storing of merchandise.[197] There were some famous markets or *bazaras* as well, such as: Domnidwara, Akbarpur, Burhan-ul-Mulk street, Bazar-i-Khas, Bazar Halim, Buddupur street, Bazar Kusa, Itimad-ul-Mulk street, Bechhatri street, Paibari street, Tripolia street, Pilpili or Dabandpili street, Hazira-i-Rani street, Manek Chouk, Kothari Halim street etc.[198]

At a distance of 12 *kos* from Ahmadabad, a city was founded by Sultan Mehmud, called Mehmudabad. There were some beautiful buildings in the area of 4 *kos*, which was surrounded by a wall.[199]

In *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, author describes the boundaries of Surat, forts, markets and main buildings etc. He says that there were *kots* or fortresses in the city: *Shaharpanah*[200] and *Alampanah. Shaharpanah* was inner as well as *Alampanah* was outer fortification.[201] Inner fortress was completed in 1669 A.D. and had 12 *bhagals* in it[202]:

North - Variavi *bhagal*

South - Navsari *bhagal*, Maajura *bhagal*

East - Sayyadpuri *bhagal*, Burhanpuri *bhagal*

West - Mulla Khadkini *bhagal*, Lakkadkotni *bhagal*

Mandelslo also gives the names of 3 *bhagals* – Navsari *bhagal,* Burhanpuri *bhagal* and Bharuchi *bhagal.*[203] All these *bhagals* were situated in the east of *Shahrpanah.* The western part of the inner *kot* was constructed near river Tapi, so public could use

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[197] Mandelslo, p. 21.

[198] *Mirat* (Supl.), pp. 8-11.

[199] *Ain*, II, p. 115.

[200] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat,* p. 23.

[201] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

[202] Ibid., p. 2.

[203] Mandelslo, p. 20.

its water for the purpose of cleaning and bathing, and on the other side of the river, there was a harbour for the purpose of trade and transport.[204] *Alampanah* was built in 1708 A.D. under the Nawab Haider Quli Khan, during the reign of Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar.[205] It also had 12 gates:[206]

North - Fatakno *Darwajo*, Variavi *Darwajo*, Kataargamno *Darwajo*

South - Navsari *Darwajo*, Jaafar Ali *Darwajo*

East - Lal *darwajo*, Dilli *Darwajo*, Salabat Parno *Darwajo*

West - Maajura *Darwajo,* Athwano *Darwajo*

Mandelslo describes the city of Baroda, which was fortified with good walls and bastions and had five gates, one of which was closed as there was no high road leading from it. The inhabitants were mostly Hindus and engaged in the profession of weaving and dying etc.[207]

Mandelslo also described Broach as a city standing upon a pretty high mountain surrounded by walls of free-stone and 'well-built that might stand amongst the strongest places of all the Indies.'[208] He mentioned that this city had two large gates on the land side and small ones towards the river, through which a great quantity of timber came in to the town from distant parts.[209] There was a Mughal officer in the fort for smooth conduct of administration and to collect the custom duty of 2% upon all commodities that entered this port.[210]

Cambay is identified by Mandelslo as a walled city with a dozen gates, very large houses, straight and broad roads and much greater in extent than Surat. Majority of people were Hindu, who engaged themselves to commerce and carried on an extensive

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[204] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat,* p. 2.

[205] Ibid.

[206] Ibid.

[207] Mandelslo, p. 15.

[208] Ibid., p. 14.

[209] Ibid.

[210] Ibid., p. 15.

business with Alchin, Diu, Goa, Mecca and Persia.[211] Akbar visited Cambay in A.D. 1572 and saw the sea for the first time in his life.[212]

One can conclude this explorative study of the region of Gujarat that it had rich river resources and well maintained roads, which were connected with the cities within the *subah* as well as outside the boundaries of Gujarat. It had sea navigation facilities, shipping and shipbuilding business. Shipbuilding was the main feature of the *subah*. All these features supported Gujarat to become an industrial region coveted for mercantile pursuits by the merchant communities.

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[211] Mandelslo, p. 41.

[212] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, p. 12.

Chapter -2

Major Merchant Communities in Mughal Gujarat

The merchants of Gujarat have earned the reputation of being the best in the world.[1] This view is shared for their honesty and integrity in Sufi literature.[2] Tom Pires, the Portuguese ambassador to China (1512-15 A.D.) acknowledges the Gujarati merchants for their knowledge of merchandise comparable with the Italian merchants, and their keen honesty for non-offence with merchandise. They were also credited for being quick in trade and proficient in accounts. For which reason he rated the Gujarati merchants higher than the Cairo merchants settled in Cambay. The interesting reflections are stated thus:

> "I now come to the trade of Cambay. These people are like Italians in their knowledge of and dealing in merchandise. All the trade in Cambay is in the hands of the heathen. Their general designation is Gujaratee, and then they are divided into various races – Banians, Brahmanas and Pattars. There is no doubt that these people have the cream of the trade. They are men who understand merchandise; they are so properly steeped in the sound and harmony of it, that the Gujaratees say that any offence connected with merchandise is pardonable. There are Gujaratees settled everywhere. They work some for some others for others. They are diligent, quick men in trade. They do their accounts with figures like ours and with our very writing. They are men, who do not give away anything that belongs to them, nor do they want anything that belongs to anyone else; wherefore they have been esteemed in Cambay up to the present, practicing their idolatry, because they enrich the kingdom greatly with the said trade. There are also some Cairo merchants settled in Cambay, and many Khorasans and Guilans from Aden and Ormuz, all of them do a great trade in the seaport towns of Cambay, but none of these count in comparison with the heathen, especially in knowledge."[3]

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[1] Polo, Marco, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Ventian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the east*, Tr. & Eds. Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, 2 Vol., II, London, 1921, p. 313.

[2] Sijzi, *Fawaid-ul-Fawad*, pp. 20-22, *Cf. Economic History of Medieval India, 1200-1500*, Eds. Irfan Habib, P.H.I.S.P.C., Pearson, Delhi, 2011, p. 132.

[3] Pires, Tome, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 41-42.

This chapter intends to identify the major merchant communities of Gujarat as well as broadly outline their chief commercial activities, area of operation and distinct repute in Gujarat.

Favourable commercial setup can be traced from the sixteenth century when Akbar pursued economic policies which facilitated merchants to intensify their business activities. First and foremost he demanded land revenue in cash. The peasants in the countryside were compelled to sell a part of their produce in the market. Commercialization of agriculture and monetization of economy gained momentum. There was an overall vigour in trading activities which triggered merchant immigration. The merchant had larger penetration into the rural areas.

Trade and commerce is a major element of Indian economy, and the class which dominates business activities is generally termed merchant community. Merchant community is basically a group of merchants. The problem appears how to determine the identification of a community? Should it be their caste or their common business or the area in which they were involved in their business activities?

Dwijendra Tripathi and M. J. Mehta underline certain criterions which categorize different businessmen, such as their ethnicity, mother tongue, religion and regional affiliation.[4]

Regarding the merchant communities of sixteenth century Gujarat, we base our study on the contemporary literature, such as *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* and other regional literature. The above mentioned Persian sources used sectarian or religious identification for the merchants, like Jain merchant, Bohra merchant, Jain *sahu* and Jain *jawahari* etc., so it is quite convenient to follow the same pattern to categorize the groups of merchants.

The merchants of medieval Gujarat were Hindus, Jain, Muslims and Parsi. However Tirmizi has adopted variant criterion to divide merchants into three broad categories.[5] He has classified them into itinerant, foreign and local converts:

1. The itinerant merchants: who visited Gujarat for purpose of trade and returned to their native countries after transacting their business.

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[4] Tripathi, D. & Mehta, M. J., 'Class Character of the Gujarati Business Community', in *Business Communities in India: A Historical Perspective*, Eds. Dwijendra Tripathi, Delhi, 1984, pp. 151-152.

[5] Tirmizi, S.A.I., 'Muslim merchants of Medieval Gujarat', in *Business Communities in India*, op. cit., p. 59.

2. The foreign merchants: who hailed from distant places and settled down in Gujarat.
3. The local converts from Hinduism to Islam.

The itinerant merchants who subsequently settled down in the coastal towns of Gujarat came from far off places like Egypt, Persia, Turkey and Arabia.[6] The epigraphical records allude that the Arab and Persian merchants had settled down not only in the coastal parts of Gujarat but had penetrated into the towns of Pattan and Junagarh, where they were in a large number and build mosques in these towns.[7] An Arabic inscription found at Junagarh give details of a mosque constructed in 1286-87 A.D. by Afif-ut-Dumiyawad din Abdul Qasim bin Ali Al Iraqi, who has been described as "the prince of the ship-masters of the pilgrims to the holy cities of Mecca and Madina."[8]

Among the local converts of Islam, the Bohras, the Khojas and the Memons were commercially most important communities.[9] In the ports of Cambay and Surat, there were both Hindu and Muslim merchants. In Rander all the great merchants were Muslim, while the population of Diu was notable for the large number of Turkish merchant resident there.[10]

Thus the major merchant communities of Gujarat include Banias, Bohras. Parsis, Khojas, Memons, Ghanchis, Chalebis, Armenians and European traders Among most of these, there were different septs and other categories.

These merchants were responsible for operations and organizations of the mercantile economy at large. They were involved in commodity trade, brokerage, money lending and banking.

Gujarat has maintained its identity as a commercial centre and fame for industries, such as shipbuilding, cotton, silk, indigo, agate and paper etc. Different communities of merchants were involved in these industries. They had a significant role in the business, the paper industry of Ahmadabad was dominated by the Bohras, shipbuilding in various places was monopolized by Bohras and later on by Parsis, money-lending was the

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[6] 'Muslim Merchants of Medieval Gujarat', pp. 61-62.

[7] Ibid., p. 62.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., p. 63.

[10] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, op. cit., p.26.

specialty of Banias, and they also had monopoly over brokery. Some Jain Banias were involved in the jewellery business. Sometimes these merchants mediated between their community and administration, between their fellow merchants and European merchants. Some merchants also played the role of translators for European merchants and companies.

The merchants of Gujarat have attracted attention of historians for their business style, their commercial network, contacts with Europeans and their monopoly over some particular merchandise. They attracted Pearson's attention for their dealings with Portuguese in Gujarat especially Cambay and Diu. Cambay has been selected by him as it was a place where a Portuguese trader resided and this number was highest in comparison to any other non-Portuguese Asian city.[11] Even private merchants of Portugal utilized Gujarati capital and Gujarati brokers for their business. In due course Gujarati merchants earned recognition, honours, position and considerable respect by the Portuguese.[12] In the context of Gujarati-Portuguese trade relations, Pearson was impressed by well-defined international routes linked with Gujarat, especially the most important route which was connected via ports of Gujarat to Malacca and Aden. Trade between these places was entirely dominated and handled by Gujarati ships.

Makarand Mehta has other reasons for interest in Gujarati merchants. He finds Gujarat was the most urbanized region which had a capacity to pay a big amount for revenue. This region had well-linked ports and industrial cities which was connected by roads. Different communities were involved in business, such as Parsis, Hindus, Jains and Muslims. Merchants had organized guilds and various industries, such as agate industry of Cambay, paper industry of Ahmadabad, shipbuilding at Surat etc.

Ashin Das Gupta has focused upon Surat and its decline. In this context he has discussed Bohras of Surat, especially Mulla Abdul Ghafur. S.C. Misra and Karim Mehmud Master have broadly discussed about Muslim communities of Gujarat, their origin and socio-religious set-up in the region. While Deepak Bardolikar has dealt only with the Bohras of Sunni sect of Muslims, and Piloo Nanavutty has traced Parsis' history in his account.

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[11] *Coastal Western India*, op.cit., pp. 102-111.

[12] Ibid.

Banias:

Fortunately we have some regional Gujarati sources like *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala* and *Amdabadno Itihas* which have a rich mine of information about the Banias of Gujarat.

Among the modern scholars interesting observation on the importance of Gujarati Banias who sold cotton textile at Mocha has been made in the context of eighteenth century by Ashin Das Gupta. He points out the prevalence of Bania calendar as distinct from the Nauroz/new year system of payment. The Bania calendar was determined by Diwali festival and sail of Hindustani fleet. Similarly, the Bania adhered to Bania dollar which was 2.5% below the Spanish dollar. Gupta thus underlines the ascendancy of Bania merchants at the Yemeni port city on the basis of Coin of account, System of selling debt, Calendar of payment.

The traditional view regarding Bania caste was highlighted by *Abul Fazl*: "One caste of *Bais* (*Vaishya*), which is designated *Banik*, is called Bania in ordinary usage and '*Baqqal*' in Arabic."[13] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* also endorses this view

The generic appellation applied to the trading community within the Hindu fold was *Vaisya* or more commonly Bania, or in Gujarati - *Vania*. This is the term which the foreign traders commonly used, they could distinguish only between the Bania and the Muslim traders. For them every non-Muslim merchant was a *Vania*. However this general term encompassed a host of castes. Broadly at least the major classification was among the Jainas and the *Vaishnava Vanias*.[14]

The Hindus and the Jainas were ancient community in India. Their identity is marked by their distinct theology, philosophy, religion and social mores and literary traditions etc. The profession of Jainas in historical period has been primarily trade, both local and long distance. Jains were largely settled in Gujarat and Rajasthan, however as traders they traversed across the country.

In the economy of Gujarat as a whole there is no doubt that the dominant group in all trade matters was the Banias.[15] Jain *Vanias* were called *Shravak* and Hindu *Vaishya Vanias* were called *Meshri*. The Meshri Banias were very religious and gave special importance to omens. They usually consulted astrologers for their important and

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[13] *Ain*, III, op. cit., p. 132.

[14] S.C. Misra, 'The Medieval Trader and his Social World', *Business Communities in India*, pp. 46-47.

[15] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 26.

religious works. They were staunch adherents of the *Vallabhacharya* sect to which they were said to have been converted in fifteenth-sixteenth century, and they showed extreme respect for their *Mahajans* or religious heads.[16] The Banias employed Brahmins in all their religious ceremonies. As a rule the priest belonged to the corresponding sub-division. For instance a *Modh* Bania generally had a *Modh* Brahmin as his family priest and a *Shrimali* Bania a *Shrimali* Brahmin.[17] The Dutch factor W. Gelleynssen de Jong, who was in Burhanpur-Broach area from 1623 A.D. to 1632 A.D., provides details about the rituals and practices of Bania community.[18] This community appears from his account as very well organized. It was a well-knit community primarily engaged in money exchange, business and lending capital.[19]

Although it was a well-organized group but they also had some sectarian divisions. Sources speak of different number of sept for instance Ovington mentions there were 24 castes/sects among the Banias.[20] De Jongh informed about the Banias being divided into 60-70 sects.[21] Careri mentions in his account that there were 20 sects of Banias and they did not marry into the other, and they did not eat anything that has life, they love to eat only herbs and pulses.[22]

Fortunately Ali Mohammad Khan has supplied the following exhaustive list of these 84 sub-castes of Banias in his '*Mirat-i-Ahmadi*'. Generally Jain traders and Hindu Vaishya traders were jointly called Banias. These 84 castes[23] were as follows:

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[16] Campbell, James M., Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency, Vol. IX, Part-1 (*Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat, 2 Vols., I*), Bombay, 1901 (Reprint-1988), p. 89.

[17] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* II, op. cit., p. 89.

[18] Gokhale, Balkrishna, *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, Bombay, 1979, p. 35; Akhtar, Jawaid, 'Merchant Communities of Gujarat During the seventeenth Century as Described by *Geleynssen De Jongh*', P.I.H.C., 53rd session, 1993, p. 292.

[19] 'Merchant Communities of Gujarat During the seventeenth Century as Described by *Geleynssen De Jongh*', op. cit., p. 291.

[20] Ovington, p. 168.

[21] De Jongh *Cf.* 'Merchant Communities of Gujarat during the seventeenth Century as Described by *Geleynssen De Jongh*', p. 291.

[22] Careri, p. 256.

[23] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 138-139.

Castes of Banias

(16th-17th c.)

1.Shrimali	*2.**Oswal***	*3.Vaghersal*	*4.Dhand*	*5.Pakarval*
6.Medaval	*7.Harsura*	*8.Suranna*	*9.**Paliwal***	*10.Bhalu*
11.Ghandirval	*12.Bisalval*	*13.Khanderuval*	*14.Porval*	*15.Disalval*
16.Gujar	*17.Mohedval*	*18.**Agarwal***	*19.Jaelval*	*20.Mamaval*
21.Kathuniaval	*22.Korantval*	*23.Chatarval*	*24.Soniwal*	*25.Sodatival*
26.Magar	*27.Mohad*	*28.Jhalora*	*29.Lad*	*30.Kapol*
31.Khadatia	*32.Vayada*	*33.Vasevra*	*34.Bacheval*	*35.Nagdhara*
36.Karahda	*37.Bhabura*	*38.Masuda*	*39.Narsingahara*	*40.Kaherval*
41.Panchamval	*42.Hanerval*	*43.Sarkhandera*	*44.Ves*	*45.Rasemki*
46.Kambuval	*47.Jandeval*	*48.Bhogiauda*	*49.Ujhetval*	*50.Banhvad*
51.Shigod	*52.Bhakaur*	*53.Walmel*	*54.Tisuda*	*55.Tablota*
56.Ashtawargi	*57.Latisakha*	*58.Dhanora*	*59.Kachura*	*60.Kehbacho*
61.Honbad	*62.Neema*	*63.Padma*	*64.Meheria*	*65.Heheria*
66.Dhakval	*67.Mankuvar*	*68.Goelvad*	*69.Mahurdad*	*70.Chitroda*
71.Kakalioa	*72.Bhareja*	*73.Anandaura*	*74.Nagora*	*75.Sachora*
76.Bhongadwal	*77.Madhada*	*78.Bharmania*	*79.Vagdia*	*80.Mandura*
81.Purba	*82.Sorathiapurvad*	*83.Badhnora*	*84.Nibhadadar*	

The Sanskrit word '*Banik*' or '*Vanik*' meant merchants. The Arabic word '*Baqqal*', used in Indo-Persian writings as a synonym for Bania, meant "grain merchants" in India and "greengrocer" in Iran.[24]

In view of similarities in the several socio – cultural customs, outsiders were unable to distinguish between Hindus and Jains. Since the Jains were mostly traders, they were regarded as a part of the Hindu Vaishya community. The Hindus and the Jains lived harmoniously. In Ahmadabad, Jains were more prosperous as a community, and better educated than their Vaishnava fellow Vanias.[25] It cannot be denied that Jainism helped to mould the commercial structure of the Gujarat. This is true for Vaishnavism also.[26]

Jain Banias / ***Shravakas***: Some historians of Gujarat like Pearson and Mehta etc. have observed that Jains were the most dominant social group even in the pre seventeenth

[24] Habib, Irfan, 'Merchant Communities in Pre-Colonial India', in *Rise of Merchant Empires*, Ed. James D. Tracy, 1990, p. 380.

[25] *Ahmadabad: A Study in Indian Urban History*, op. cit., p. 23.

[26] Ibid.

century. The deep inclination of the Jain merchants to use their influence towards maintaining and reinforcing the cultural and religious ethos and its symbol was sustained by their teachers, the '*sadhus*', particularly the distinguished *Suris*. The distinguished figureheads provided the basis on which Jain tradition is founded.[27]

Religious debates and discussions were carried on at the *Ibadatkhana*. Abul Fazl informs us that by 1578 A.D., representatives of many creeds had gathered there to join the discussions.[28] The term '*Jati*'[29] (Yati) and '*Sewara*'[30] used by Abul Fazl, and the term '*Samanis*' by Badaoni, refers to the monks and members of the Jain Svetambara sect.[31] The Jain monks like: Hiravijai Suri, Vijaisen Suri, Bhanuchandra 'Upadhyaya', Shantichandra etc., played a prominent role in the discussion and debates at the *Ibadatkhana*. They exercised considerable impact on the mind of the emperor.[32] Hiravijai Suri persuaded the emperor to prohibit the slaughter of animals at least during the Jaina festival of '*Paryusana*'.[33] Akbar's policy of religious toleration seems implicit in a '*farman*', which he issued in 6th June 1584 A.D., ordering his officials not to allow slaughter of animals during the 12 days of the Jain '*Paryusana*' festival, in places where the Jains were settled.[34] In V.S. 1641 first *Ashadha* (June 1584 A.D.), the honourable title of– '*Jagatguru*' (world preceptor) was conferred upon *Acharya* Hiravijai Suri.[35]

Two greatest merchants of the seventeenth century Virji Vora of Surat and Shantidas Zaveri of Ahmadabad, both were Jain Banias. Banias were not only involved in business but they were also involved in other commercial activities. Bania brokers were very faithful and popular among the European companies.

In spite of professing common religion and bound by vows to practice non-violence, the Jains were divided into several sects and sub-sects since ancient times. The

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[27] *Business Communities in India*, p. 48.

[28] *Akbarnama*, III, op. cit., p. 365.

[29] Ibid.

[30] *Ain*, III, p. 222.

[31] Desai, Mohanlal Dalchand, 'Jaina Priest at the Court of Akbar', J.G.R.S., Vol. IX (No.-1), January, 1942, p. 2.

[32] 'Jaina Priest at the Court of Akbar', op. cit., pp. 4-9.

[33] Ibid., p. 7.

[34] Prasad, Pushpa, 'Akbar and Jains', in *Akbar and His India*, Eds. Irfan Habib, O.U.P., 1997 (reprint-2000, 2004), p. 99.

[35] Jaina Priest at the Court of Akbar, p. 7.

caste system had entered among the Jains right from the time of Mahavira.[36] The first sectarian division brought into existence – the *Svetambara* and *Digambra* sects in time of *Bhadrabahu*, a Jain saint during the Mauryan period. The *Svetambaras* were generally called '*Shevras*' and '*Jati*' (Yati) in Gujarat, they were the class of mendicants who observe celibacy and had knowledge of medicine and astrology.[37] Their popular deity was *Parasnath* (Parswanath), a section of their community was called '*Dhoondias*' who did not believe in images. They abstain from food and drink for 40 days in their special period called '*Pachusan*' (Paryusana).[38] When Mandelslo reached the village Sojitara at night, he saw that the Jain shopkeepers did not burn the candles because of the fear of insects being killed.[39]

The *Shevras* were also divided into 84 classes called '*Gachhas*', as in line of the Banias and the Brahmanas their classes derived from the name of their towns where they were settled:[40]

Castes of Jains / *Gachhas*

(16^{th}-17^{th} c.)

1.Oswal Gachha	*2.Kankesara*	*3.Jaravan Gachha*	*4.Jhirnia*	*5.Baharucha*
6.Anpojha	*7.Admoya*	*8.Godvia*	*9.Vikodavia*	*10.Rahanmalia*
11.Morasia	*12.Dasahiya*	*13.Kachpalia*	*14.Kahokhawal*	*15.Madodiya*
16.Brahmna	*17.Jalora*	*18.Bokadia*	*19.Madmada*	*20.Chatyodia*
21.Sachora	*22.Gujdia*	*23.Sidhntia*	*24.Raksiyana*	*25.Anchalia*
26.Baldhara	*27.Bhaorajia*	*28.Gaorania*	*29.Makedak*	*30.Dharamkokha*
31.Nagora	*32.Pakhtaval*	*33.Tamadal*	*34.Khedarval*	*35.Mandura*
36.Nagral	*37.Khamyatba*	*38.Surana*	*39.Badodia*	*40.Somara*
41.Mandalia	*42.Kothipura*	*43.Baparval*	*44.Borsadia*	*45.Jangada*
46.Dodandoyana	*47.Chitrao*	*48.Deegna*	*49.Ved*	*50.Vajhara*
51.Kutubpura	*52.Kacholia*	*53.Sadbaya*	*54.Vakra*	*55.Karhisa*
56.Purantilak	*57.Royuma*	*58.Dhabhakha*	*59.Gambhen*	*60.Panchdhalia*
61.Palanpura	*62.Kandhara*	*63.Gudbalia*	*64.Sadpunaya*	*65.Nakrotia*
66.Hansarkotia	*67.Bhatnera*	*68.Sorathia*	*69.Bhimsena*	*70.Tangadia*
71.Kanujia	*72.Vakhesara*	*73.Dhadda*	*74.Sidmalipura*	*75.Sevantaria*

[36] Kalsiwala, K.C., *Khandelwal Jain Samaj Ka Itihas*, Jaipur, 1985, p. 55-56.

[37] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 135; *Akbarnama*, III, p. 365.

[38] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), pp. 135-136.

[39] Mandelslo, p. 46.

[40] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl) p. 137-138.

76.Khokhadhara	77.Nikhamia	78.Akhamia	79.Dav	80.Chairatval
81.Sanjatia	82.Barejan	83.Sorandval	84.Nagol	

Oswal:[41] The Jains who belonged to *Osian* are called *Oswal* Jains. *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala* mentions that Shantidas was a *Kshatriya* and closely related to Sisodia dynasty. His grandfather Vatsasheth and great-grandfather Padam Shah[42] or Harpal Sheth belonged to the family of *Samant* Sangram Singh and Kumarpal of Sisodia dynasty.[43] Sisodias gave protection to Jainism in the earlier period. Some of the rulers encouraged trade and commercial activities as well.[44] So Shantidas was originally a *Kshatriya*. This was a tradition in Jainism since the time of first *tirthankar* Rishabhdeva. Most of the *tirthankaras* were *kshatriyas*.[45]

Jain migration from Rajasthan started as early as the reign of Akbar. Jahangir established peace with Mewar, the only state which had declined to accept the friendship offered by Mughals. This facilitated the Jains to travel all over the Mughal Empire.[46] The arrival of the European companies furnished another reason of the movements of Jain merchants from one place to another.[47] This migration process continued till the reign of Aurangzeb.[48] But at the dawn of the sixteenth century, the Jains were mainly concentrated in Rajasthan and Gujarat.[49]

Shrimali: *Shrimali* had their roots in Shrimal (at present Bhinmal, about 50 miles west of Mount Abu) in Marwar. They were found all over Gujarat, but mainly in Ahmadabad and Kaira. They were divided into *dasa* and *visa*. They could dine together but did not intermarry. The *visas* were exclusively Jains.[50] Fortunately for us we have in

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[41] *A History of Gujarat*, II, pp. 140-149.

[42] His great grand- father's name was Padam Shah at some places he is called Harpal Sheth. Buddhisagarji, *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, Eds. Mohanlal Dalichand Desai, 2 Vols., I, Ahmadabad, 1912, pp. 1, 49.

[43] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, op. cit., p. 1.

[44] Ibid., p. 2.

[45] Ibid., p. 1.

[46] Sharma, G. N., *Mewar and the Mughal Emperors*, Agra, 1954, pp. 135-138.

[47] Misra, S. C., 'Jain Merchants in Eastern India under the Great Mughals', *Business Communities in India*, op. cit., p. 72.

[48] 'Jain Merchants in Eastern India under the Great Mughals', p. 73.

[49] Ibid., p. 69.

[50] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat*, I, p. 73.

Ardhakathanak a remarkable autobiography of Banarasidas belonging to the sixteenth century written in *Brijbhasha*. Banarasidas belonged to the enterprising clan of Shrimalis among the Jains. He gives interesting information about the origin of this sept, he mentions that before the conversion into Jains they were Rajputs of royal blood. Later they came to be called '*srimals*' because they took to wearing garland inscribed with the *mantra*- *'sri'*.[51] This particular sept operated as an autonomous body. It was affluent enough to support its members for the cause of education and commercial interest. The demand of their business was to travel in far flung towns. They maintained close links with fellow members of the sept in order to boost trade opportunities and safe conduct of trade. They were also linked together by religious affiliations of pilgrimage and other customs. Thus there was considerable cohesion within the Shrimali community.

Hindu Banias / *Meshris*: The Mesharis also had many septs like:

Agarwal: Among the 84 septs of Banias, *Agarwal* is a popular caste even now days. They were found in north Gujarat.[52] It was a wealthy trading class and it has various explanations of their name. First, this name was derived from aromatic *agar* wood (Aquilaria agallocha), they adopted this name because they were busy in dealing in *agar* wood.[53] Second, there were a thousand families of Agnihotri Brahmins settled in Kashmir, and they supplied *agar* wood for their sacrifices by a special tribe of Vaishyas. When Alexender invaded India, he broke their sacred fire pits (*agni kund*), and these Vaishyas migrated to Agra and then they adopted this name.[54] But the most acceptable view is that they belonged to an ancient midland town – Agar (about 40 miles north—east of Ujjain).[55] They had a division – *dasa* (ten) and *visa* (twenty).[56] *Visas* were called pure and *dasa* were half pure, and *visa* Agarwal did not eat, drink or intermarry with *dasas*.[57]

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[51] Banarsidas, *Ardhakathanak*, Tr. Mukund Lath, Rajasthan Prakrit Bharti, Jaipur, 1981, p. 110.

[52] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 70.

[53] Crooke, William, *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India*, 4 Vols., I, Cosmo Publications, Delhi, 1974, pp. 14-15.

[54] *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India*, I, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[55] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 70.

[56] *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India*, I, p. 17.

[57] Ibid.

Gujar: They were mostly found in Ahmadabad, Broach and south Gujarat. They were broadly divided into *dasa* and *visa*. Later on *visas* joined *dasas*. Their family priests were Shrimalai Brahmanas and they were followers of *Vallabhacharya* sect.[58]

Chitroda: They were found mainly in Broach and Baroda. They took their name from Chitrod in Rajputana. It is noteworthy that they were not divided into *visa* and *dasa*.[59]

Paliwal: Another sub-caste *Paliwal* belonged to the town of Palli or Pali in Marwar.[60]

Disawal: They were found chiefly in north Gujarat. They took their name from an ancient town – Disa (about 89 miles north-west of Ahmadabad). They were divided into *visa, dasa* and *panchas*. *Dasas* were further divided into *Ahmadabadi, Surati* and *Ghogharis*. Both *dasa* and *visa* interdine but do not intermarry.[61]

Jhalora: Jharola or Jhalora were found chiefly in Baroda and east Gujarat and belonged to the Jhalor in Marwar. They also had divisions like *dasa, visa* and *panchas*. *Dasa* and *visa* could dine together but did not intermarry. The *panchas* formed a separate community. Jhaloras were *Vallabhacharya* Vaishnavas.[62]

Kapol: Their main region was Kathiawar, Amreli, Delvara, Mahuva and Bhavnagar. Originally they belonged to Junagarh or Girnar. They did not have any division. Their family priests were *Kandola* Brahmanas and their family goddess was *samudri-mata*. They were also *Vallabhacharya* Vaishnavas.[63]

Porvad: they were found all over Gujarat. They took their name from Porvad, a suburb Shrimal (in Marwar). They were divided into *dasa* and *visas*. Their family priests were Shrimali Brahmanas.[64]

Nagar: They were found all over Gujarat but mainly in Baroda and Kaira. They were divided into *dasa* and *visa*. They were followers of *Vallabhacharya* sect.[65]

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[58] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 71.

[59] Ibid., p. 70.

[60] *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India,* IV, p. 109.

[61] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 70.

[62] Ibid., p. 71.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., p. 73

[65] Ibid.

Nima: They were mainly found in Panch Mahal and were divided into *dasa* and *visa*, who neither eat together nor intermarry.[66]

Bohras:

Among the Muslim merchants Bohras were prominent. They operated successfully in trade with Arabia, Persia and Hindustan. In recognition of their involvement in commercial activities they were lavishly bestowed lofty titles and other honours by the Mughal Emperors. The activities of prominent Bohra like Abdul Ghafur have been investigated by Ashin Das Gupta and S.C. Misra.

The original domicile of Sunni Bohras is Gujarat (see Map-6). Fortunately enough immense mine of information is contained in regional Gujarati sources like *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas, Sunni Vahora, Surat Sonani Murat* and *Vahora Vibhutiyo* provide some rare and important information about the Bohras, such as titles given by Mughals to them, their socio-cultural life etc. the population of Sunni Bohras still inhabited in different villages of Gujarat and Saurashtra. Their main profession was trade and agriculture.[67]

According to *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, Cambay was inhabited by Brahmins, Banias, *Shravakas*, *Kanabis*, *Kolis*, *Kaachhiyas*, Rajputs, *Khaarwas*, *Ghanchis* and many communities of Muslims. Among these Muslim communities Bohras were prominent. They were fairly wealthy. Primarily they were engaged in the trade with the China, Japan.etc

> "ખંભાતની બંદર મુખ્ય વસ્તી બ્રાહ્મણ, વાણીયા, શ્રાવક, કણબી, કોળી, કાછીયા, રાજપૂત, ખારવા, ઘાંચી, અને કેટલીક જાતના મુસલમાનની છે જેમાં ખંભાતના મુસલમાન વ્હોરા એટલા પૈસાદાર છે કે તેઓ ચીન, જંગબાર, અને જાપાન સુધી વ્યાપાર ચલાવે છે."[68]

The highest number of Sunni Bohras was recorded in Broach district followed by Surat, Sabarkantha, Baroda and Kaira district. The Bohras were initially settled in the

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[66] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 73.

[67] *Sunni Vahora*, op. cit., p. 9.

[68] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, op. cit., p. 4.

north, were '*Pattani*' Bohras. The Bohras of central and south Gujarat were trading community, with agriculture as its main occupation in rural areas.[69]

According to Deepak Bardolikar the cities of Ahmadabad, Pattan, Surat and Broach, Bohra merchants traded in cotton, silk, cloth, brocade, paper, indigo, *ghee*, molasses, ornaments, jewelry and the arms material etc.

> "અમદાવાદ, પાટણ, સુરત, ભરૂચ, વગેરે શહેરનો સુન્ની વ્હોરા વેપારીયો સુતર, રેશમ, કાપડ, કિનખાબ, કાગળ, ગજી, ઘી, ગોળ, ઘરેના, ઝવેરાત, શસ્ત્રસામગ્રી, વગેરે વસ્તુઓને વેપાર કરતા."[70]

Since Mulla Muhammad Ali was a Shia, his disciples naturally adopted the Shia creed. At Pattan, which was then a big city, they were in the majority. When Sultan Muzaffar took possession of Gujarat, his Sunni followers who emigrated with him from Delhi, converted the Shia Bohras of the town. However the Bohras of the neighbouring district and villages remained Shias.[71]

From the below stated divisions it appears the nomenclature is derived from their respective spiritual leader. Some of them came with Sayyid Imam-ud-Din (buried at the village of Giramntha).[72]

The Ismaili Bohras were the most prominent among the Muslim merchants of Gujarat, especially in Surat. Being persecuted for their religious beliefs and practices by the Sunni rulers of the area and being "gradually squeezed out of its traditional avocations by a hostile political regime", the Bohras became rapidly urbanized, and the community tended "to the diversion of more and more people towards commerce" in which they soon established their skills and leadership.[73]

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[69] Engineer, Asghar Ali, *The Muslim Communities in Gujarat*, Ajanta Publication, 1989, p. 69.

[70] *Sunni Vahora*, op. cit., p. 23.

[71] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), pp. 130-131.

[72] Ibid.

[73] *Muslim Communities in Mughal Gujarat*, op. cit., pp. 25, 27; *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, op. cit., p. 35.

Mirat-i-Ahmadi and *Mahagujaratno* Musalmano furnish the name of seven divisions of Bohras, but the list varies. Surprisingly only three names in both the sources are same the rest are different:[74]

Divisions of Shia Bohras

	Mirat-i-Ahmadi		***Mahagujaratna Musalmano***
1.	Daudi	1.	Daidi
2.	Sulaimani	2.	Sulaimani
3.	Alia	3.	Alia
4.	Zaidia	4.	Jafari
5.	Hajumia	5.	Nagoshi
6.	Ismaili	6.	Hiptia
7.	Nazaria	7.	Mehdibagwala

"શિયા વહોરાઓની જમાતમાં અનેક પેતાવીભાગો છે. તેઓની કલાનુકમ સંક્ષિપ્તમાં નીચે પ્રમાણે છે: ૧.જાફરી, ૨.સુલૈમાની, ૩.દાઉદી, ૪.અલિયા, ૫.નાગોશી, ૬.હિપ્તિયા, ૭.મેહાડીબાગવાલા.".[75]

Mirat-i-Ahmadi explains the division by informing that initially the Sunni and Shia Bohras permitted intermarriages, later from the time of Sayyed Jafar of Shiraz[76], the two communities became completely separate from each-other. The Sunni were called "the big community", and the Shia "the small community". The Shias always had a leader who was called a Mulla. He was a learned man and was authorized to appoint collectors of *Zakat*[77] and *Khums*[78] which were paid by their followers.[79] In fifteenth century A.D.

[74] Master, Karim Mehmud, *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), Prachya Vidya Mandir, M.S. University, Baroda, 1969, p. 140.

[75] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), op. cit., p.139.

[76] Sayyed Jafar is buried inside the fort near the '*Astodia*' gate.

[77] Zakat is the practice of charitable giving by Muslims based on accumulated wealth, and is obligatory for all who are able to do so. It is considered to be a personal responsibility for Muslims to ease economic hardship for others and eliminate inequality.

this community came to have gained majority (*bahumat*) as compared to Shia Bohras and was popular as *badi jamaat* (big community).

> “ઈસુની ૧૫ મી સદીમાં આ કૌમ શિયા વોહરા કૌમની સરખામણીમાં બહુમતીમાં હોવાથી એ 'બડી જમાત' તરીકે ઓળખાતી રહી.”.[80]

Ismaili: During the period of Sultan Ahmad Shah of Gujarat (1411-1442 A.D.), Shia Ismaili Bohras were spread over Gujarat. They were extremely influential in the court as well. But in Anhilwara Patan, Mulla Jaafar Patani, posed a threat to Shia Ismaili Bohras. As a result many Shia Bohras joined his leadership. They rebelled against the stringent rules and religious views of Ismailis. This breakaway group presented their views intelligently and impressively in front of Shia Ismailis. They thus emerged as Sunni group in Patan, in a quite short span of time.[81]

Jaafari: Under the leadership of Jaafar Patani and his followers, a big community of Sunni Bohras came into existence. It was called *moti jamaat* (big community) due its magnitude of followers. This community was alternatively called *Jaafari* Bohras, presently these Bohras are addressed as – Surati Bohra, Patani Bohra, Kheroot Bohra and Charotari Bohra.[82] There was a lack of organization (*sangathan*) and discipline (*niyambaddhata*) in this community. As a result this community suffered from organizational character and absence of able leader to control over it.[83]

According to testimony of Ali Muhammad during the reign of Aurangzeb, Shias were persecuted, so they did not openly profess their beliefs, so much so that they also kept their sacred texts hidden. However, this much is known that they count their months according to the Hindu calculations.[84]

Hindu Bohras: Many of the Brahmans and Banias of Gujarat also suffixed the surname of '*Vohra*'. Such converts retained their surname in Islam from the time of their first

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[78] A religious obligation to contribute one-fifth of a certain type of income to charity.

[79] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 130.

[80] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 10.

[81] Ibid., p. 13.

[82] Ibid., p. 14.

[83] Ibid., p. 10.

[84] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), pp. 130-131.

preacher Mulla Muhammad Ali. Their first religious guide being named *Bohra*, the followers were named after him.[85]

Daudi: The Daudi sept had a regional and urban character. Their mores evolved in stages. They faced persecutions. Maulana Jafar, turned dissident. This lead to large scale secessions in the fifteenth century. The practice was continued by another probable secessionist, Maulana Muhammad Tahir in the sixteenth century. These waves of reconversion reduced the original community to a minority status. It seems difficult to accept that the agrarian communities had a collective rubric.

Sunni Bohra: The Sunni Bohra embraced a number of marrying castes. They originally belonged to the same body, which had been converted to Islam by the early proselytizers, who popularized the Ismaili creed. Nevertheless, after the sixteenth century, the Ismaili community was reduced to wholly urban. More than 80% were lost to the Sunni faith.[86]

In 1686 A.D., Bohra merchants and craftsmen of Patani came to Surat. Two contemporary manuscripts viz. *Tazkira-ut-Salihin* and *Tarikh-i-Surat* gives detailed information about their migration. They settled in the locality of *Saudagarpura* in Surat. Mohammad Jamal Abdul and Miyan Abdul Hai came in the fold of Patani Bohras. The above manuscripts also give information about *Shahsaudagar* Mulla Abdul Ghafur bin Abu Baqr.

> "પાટણના વહોરા સૌદાગરો - હુન્નરમંદો અને અન્ય ધંધાધરિયો ઈ. સ. ૧૬૮૬ ના અરસામાં સુરત આવતા થયા હતા. 'તાઝ્કીરાતુંસ્સાલીહિન' અને 'તારીખે સુરત' નામે હસ્તલિખિત ગ્રંથોમાં દર્શાવ્યા પ્રમાણે બવાહિર પટણીઓ (પાટણના સુન્ની વહોરાઓ) ઈ.સ. ૧૬૮૬ અરસામાં સુરત આવી, સૌદાગરવાળા નામે ઓળખાતા સત્તામાં સ્થાયી થયા હતા. આ પાટણી વહોરાઓમાં મોહમ્મદ જમાલ અબ્દુલ કાદિર અને મિયાં અબ્દુલ હાઇ અબ્દુલ્લાહ પાટણીઓ સમાવેશ થયો હતો. એ ગ્રંથોમાં સુન્ની વહોરા શાહ્સૌદાગર મુલ્લા અબ્દુલ ગફુર બિન અબુ બકર વિષે પણ વિગતપૂર્ણ માહિતી આપવામાં આવી છે."[87]

[85] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Supl.), p. 131.

[86] '*The Medieval Trader and his Social World*', op. cit., pp. 49-50.

[87] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 42.

Lotiya Bohras: Numerically the largest community was of *Daudis* among the Shia Bohras. They were also called *lotiyas,* because their turban had the shape of ewer.

"શિયા વહોરાઓ માં સૌથી મોટી કૌમ દાઉદી વહોરાઓની છે. તેમને 'લોટીયા' પણ કહે છે.
તેમની પાઘડી 'લોટા' જેવી હોય છે....તેથી એ નામ પડ્યું છે."[88]

They were mostly found in Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Junagarh, Kuttch, Bhuj, Mandavi, Ahmadabad, Ahmadnagar, Broach, Cambay, Dohad, Godhara, Gogha, Navsari, Surat and Vadodara/Baroda.[89]

The highest numbers of Daudi Bohras were found in Panch Mahal district, followed by Surat and Mehsana. The Daudi Bohras, as is well known, are prosperous trading community. Only a few of them followed any other calling.[90] *Vada Mullaji* (big Mullaji) or religious head of Daudis was called *Da'ai* of his community. He had following four people or subordinates for his help.

"વાળા મુલ્લાજી સાહેબ તેમના પંથના "દાઈ" ગણાય છે. તેમના હાથ નીચેના મુલ્લાઓ ચાર
દરાજ્જાના હોય છે: ૧. માઝાન, ૨. મુશબીર, ૩. માશાયખ, ૪. મુલ્લા." [91]

The terminology for subordinates was as follows:

Subordinates of *Da'ai* of Daudi Bohras

1. Maazan	Record keeper and messenger of Vada Mullaji to the people (parwangi).
2. Mushbir	Worked as executor.
3. Mashayakh	(plural of Sheikh) worked as lawyer.
4. Mulla	Means *vali*, their main work was to teach the youngsters of their *Jamaat.*

Alia: The founder of *Alia* sect of Shia Bohras, was the son of Ibrahim.[92]

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[88] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 143.

[89] Ibid.

[90] *Muslim Communities in Gujarat*, p. 70.

[91] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 159.

[92] Sheikh Adam's son, Sheikh Adam was the religious head at the time of Ali.

"અલીએ વહોરાઓની પેઅતકૌમ સ્થાપનાર અલીતે વખતમાં વાળા મુલ્લાજી શેખ આદમના પુત્ર ઈબ્રાહીમના પુત્ર હતા."[93]

There were many Bohra merchants in Gujarat, however some were very prominent. Some Gujarati texts give information of such merchants.

The power and prestige of the Bohras can be gauged from the regional Gujarati sources.

"શેખ હમીદે શાહજહાંના વખતમાં વેપારમાં ખુબ પ્રગતિ કરી. વખત જતાં એના પોતાના સાત વહાણ દરિયા ખેડતા થયા હતા. શાહજહાને એને ઉમ્દાતુતતુજ્જારનો (વેપારીયોમાં ભારોસપાત્રનો) માનવંતો ઈલ્કામ અને પાલ્કીનો અધિકાર આપ્યો હતો."[94]

Sheikh Hamid was one of them, he came to Surat in 1640 A.D. and his trade flourished during the reign of Shahjahan.

"શેખ હમીદ ઈ. સ. ૧૬૪૦ માં અમદાવાદથી સુરત આવી વસ્યા હતા. તેમનો શાહજહાંના સમયમાં વેપારમાં પુષ્કળ પ્રગતિ કરેલી તેમના સાત વહાણો ચાલતા હતા.".[95]

He owned seven ships. Emperor bestowed upon the title of '*Umdat-ut-Tujjar*' (best/reliable among the merchants), elephant & palanquin, turban and a diamond crest. He was bestowed land assignment also. He was exempted from revenue of worth Rs.1,00,000/- from the ruler.

"એ કેટલીક જમીનોની ભેંટ અને એક લાખ રૂપિયા સુધીની મહેસુલની માફી આપવામાં આપી હતી.".[96]

Similarly we learn of the prestige of the family of Sheikh Sarkheji, who was issued a *farman* by Shahjahan in order to confer the title of '*Umdat-ut-Tujjar*' to Sheikh

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[93] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 166.

[94] *Surat Sonani Murat*, op. cit., p. 6.

[95] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 26.

[96] Ibid.

Hamid and it bore the seal of Shahjahan, princess Jahanara and governor (*mutasaddi*) Haqeeqat Khan of Surat.

> "આ કુટુંબ પાસે આ બંધા ફરમાનો હજી રહ્યા છે. શાહજહાંને શેખ હમીદને ખિતાબ લક્ષ્યો , તેના ફરમાન પર શાહજહાંની તથા રાજકુંવરી જહાનઆરાની સહીત મુતાસદી હકીકત ખાન મહોર છે."[97]

His son Sheikh Muhammad Fazil was also a wealthy merchant. He was also honoured by the title of '*Umdat-ut-Tujjar*'.[98] In 1713 A.D., Farrukhsiyar addressed a *farman* for the mint of Surat to issue 4000 coins daily in order to reward him for his scholarly activities and efforts.

> "બાદશાહ ફર્રુખ્સીયારે સુરતની ટાંકશાલના મોહમ્મદ ફઝીલ દરોજ જયારે માંગે ત્યારે ચાર હજાર લગીના સિક્કા પાડી આપવાનો હતો."[99]

Another big name was Mulla Abdul Ghafur, the wealthiest Bohra merchant of the city. He came to Surat in late sixties from the northern town of Pattan.[100] He was called Mulla because of his distinct status in the mosque. He was *haji* and was generally addressed as Mulla. He enjoyed a high position among the Gujarati merchants. Manucci informs us that he was "*the most powerful merchant at Surat, and owns over 20 ships of his own.*"[101]

There are variations in the number of ships he owned. According to Manucci and Hamilton he had 20 ships. Bardolikar says he had 19 ships. Ashin Das and Pearson mention that he had 17 ships after the raids of Shivaji. B.G. Gokhale says that his family had around 34 ships. One can thus estimate that Mulla Ghafur owned from 17 to 34 ships in his life-time. We do not have details about his Ships, but his main ships were as follows:

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97 *Surat Sonani Murat*, op. cit., p. 62; Also see *Sunni Vahora*, p. 27.

98 *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 62; *Sunni Vahora*, p.27.

99 *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 62; *Sunni Vahora*, p.27.

100 *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, op. cit., p.77.

101 Manucci, Niccolao, *Storia do Mogor*, Tr. William Irvine, 3 Vols., III, Calcutta, 1965, p. 292.

Details of Mulla Abdul Ghafur's Ships

SHIP	CAPACITY
1. Firuz Baksh[102]	500 tons, It was among the largest ships at Surat at that time.
2. Fateh Murad[103]	It was a fast sailor.
3. Hussaini[104]	-
4. Fez Resan[105]	-
5. Queda Merchant[106]	-

Ghafur controlled about ¼ of the entire mercantile shipping at Surat.[107] He received the title of '*Malek-ut-Tujjar*' from Mughal emperor.

"બાદશાહ તરફથી એમને 'માંલેકુત-તુજ્જાર' નો ખિતાબ મળ્યો હતો..."[108]

His son Mulla Abdul Hai was also a successful merchant and was honoured the title of '*Umdat-ut-Tujjar*', an elephant and a dress of honour.[109]

Mulla Muhammad Ali, son of Abdul Hai, continued his family business. He had a conflict with the Nawab of Surat.[110] Ali Mohammad says that- '*he had his own army of three thousand soldiers.*'[111] He bought a village called '*Athwa*' (near Surat) and developed a town over here, which was known as '*Rasoolabad*', where he made a fort and a port.

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[102] Gupta, Ashin Das, 'A Note on Ship-owing Merchants of Surat, c. 1700', *Merchants of Maritime India 1500-1800*, Eds. Ashin Das Gupta, Variorum, 1994, pp. 109-115.

[103] 'Gujarati Merchants and the Red Sea Trade', op. cit., p.128.

[104] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat, sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries*, p. 119.

[105] 'A Note on Ship-owing Merchants of Surat, c. 1700', op. cit., pp. 112-114; Also see *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 10.

[106] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat,* p. 42.

[107] 'A Note on Ship-owing Merchants of Surat, c. 1700', p. 111.

[108] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 27.

[109] Ibid.

[110] *Sunni Vahora*, pp. 27-28.

[111] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 457-461.

"...એ તેજસ્વી શાહ્સોદાગરે સુરત નજીકનું અઠવા ગામ ખરીદી ત્યાં રસૂલાબાદ નામે શહરે વસાવ્યું હતું. આ શહેરમાં તેમને કિલ્લો અને બંદર પણ કરાવેલા.".[112]

The family business of Ghafur continued till the time of the grandson of Abdul Hai-Majiduddin Fateh.[113] Bohras were an important part of merchants' society and played a very prominent role in trading activities, especially in shipping. They had good relations with the Mughals and got many titles for their commercial talent and sometimes for their literary contributions as well. Besides business, Bohras were also interested in literature, translation of manuscripts and some of them had their own library and clerical staff for translations and to collect manuscripts from far off countries.

Chalebis:

Chalebi is originally a Turkish word which means- '*Amir*' (noble) or a 'man of god'.[114] Chalebis were Ottoman Turks and by profession they were navigators.[115] This term was used for upper classes in Turkey.[116] They came in India during the reign of Humayun. A Turkish navigator Siddi Ali Rais landed at Surat in 1553 A.D. he was a poet, writer, astronomer, mathematician, and geographer. He wrote *Mirat-ul-Mumalik* (mirror of countries), *Al-Muhit* (the Ocean) and *Mirat-ul-Kainat*.[117] He stayed at Surat for one year and then he visited Gujarat, Sind and Delhi. Probably he was the first Chalebi who temporarily established himself in Surat.[118]

It seems that by mid-seventeenth century Chalebis had established their colonies at Surat and came into prominence by the end of the seventeenth century, and they maintained a few *sarais* for strangers.[119] At the time when Shivaji sacked Surat in 1664

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112 *Sunni Vahora*, pp. 27-28.

113 Ibid.

114 Khan, Afzal, 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', P. I. H. C., 40th session, Waltair, 1979, P. 408; *Sunni Vahora*, p. 28.

115 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', op. cit., P. 408.

116 Ibid., p. 408.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid., p. 409.

A.D and 1670 A.D., a new *sarai* was owned by the Chalebis which they defended against Shivaji.[120]

Mohammad Chalebi was the oldest eminent merchant who had keen knowledge of trade and commerce. He owned a ship called 'welcome', by which he regularly traded with Queda in 1672 A.D.[121] He also used English ships for his business, in 1683 A.D. he imported some parcels through English ship 'laurel' from Gombroon. He did not pay freight for that because he had some agreements with English company.[122]

In 1702 A.D., Sulaiman Chalebi acquired influence over the Mughal governor.[123] He used his influence to extort money from the Banias of Surat. A complaint was lodged against him by the Banias of Surat on 27 December 1703 A.D. They complained that Sulaiman Chalebi, being a favourite of the late governor Itibar Khan, had extoted Rs. 85,000/- from them, then he was detained at *kotwali* with the object of forcing him to refund the money to the complainants. Sulaiman refused to pay the amount and said that he received that amount for the benefit and use of the previous governor. The new governor had put some guards at his house till he finally satisfied the complainants.[124]

Ashin Das Gupta cites the names of a few leading Chalebi merchants of first quarter of the eighteenth century, such as Haji Ahmad Chalebi, Ibrahim Chalebi, Hussain Chalebi and Omar Chalebi.[125] Haji Ahmad Chalebi was an important shipping magnate and had at least eight ships of his own.[126]

Ahmad Chalebi, good friend of Mulla Muhammad Ali, was a successful businessman of that time. According to *Sunni Vahora* - Mughal Emperor Alamgir honoured him with the title of '*Zubd-ut-Tujjar.*'

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[120] *EFI*, 1661-64, pp. 297, 308.

[121] Ibid., 1670-77, p. 226.

[122] Ibid., 1678-84, pp. 329-330.

[123] 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', p. 410.

[124] *Selection from the Letters, Dispatched and other State Papers Preserved in the Bombay Secretariat* (Home Series), Vol. I, Ed. George W. Forest, Bombay, 1887, p. 285, *Cf* 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', p. 410.

[125] Gupta, Ashin Das, 'The Merchant of Surat c. 1700-50', Eds. Edmund Leach & S.N. Mukherji, *Elites in South Asia*, Cambridge, 1970, 204.

[126] 'The Merchant of Surat c. 1700-50', op. cit., p. 208.

> “મુલ્લા મોહમ્મદ અલીના જીગરી દોસ્ત અહમદ ચેલેબીનો વેપાર ઘણો મોટો હતો. બાદશાહ આલામ્ગીરે તેમને 'ઝુબ્દ-તુત-તુજ્જારનો ' ખિતાબ અર્પણ કર્યો હતો.”.[127]

However they were competitors in business pursuits since they were the common traders in the Red Sea region.[128] Ahmad Chalebi had a military contingent of two thousand Turkish (*Roomi*) soldiers. The father of Ahmad Chalebi Haji Saleh Bin Durwesh 'Musal' was employed at the court of Ghulam Khanzadah of Iraq. He came to Surat during Aurangzeb's reign. In 1677 A.D., he built a mosque in *Saudagarwada* in Surat. It was called *"Chalebi's mosque"*.[129] Nawab of Surat Tegh Begh Khan murdered Ahmad Chalebi in 1752 A.D.[130]

Another Chalebi merchant was Noman Bin Hussain, he owned a ship named- *Ganjawar*. One of the members of his family - Usman Chalebi was the owner of many (*fulkha, safineh etc.*)[131] ships. One of his ships - *safineh*[132] was captured by the Portuguese while returning laden from Jeddah. He traced it from Goa with the help of Rustam Manekji.

> “એક બીજા ચેલેબી શાહ્સૌદાગર નોમન બિન હુસ્સૈન હતા. તેમની કને ગંજાવર નામે એક વહાણ હતું. એ સિવાય એ જ પરિવારના શાહ્સૌદાગર ઉસ્માન ચેલેબી પણ અનેક વહાણોના માલિક હતા. તેમનું એક વહાણ પોર્ટુગીઝોએ પકડ્યું હતું, જે પાછું મેળવાના શેઠ રુસ્તમ માણેકને ગોવા મોકલવામાં આવ્યા હતા અને તેઓ એ કામમાં સફળ થયા હતા.”[133]

To secure its release Rustom (a Parsi broker of both English and Portuguese) went to Goa at the request of the governor of Surat – Amanat Khan.[134] The Portuguese

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[127] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 28.

On the basis of Dutch sources, Ashin Das Gupta writes in his article 'The Merchants of Surat' that community of Chalebis and Mullas had enmity, and these groups were led by Ahmad Chalebi and Mulla Mohammad Ali. However regional sources call both the merchants as friends.

[128] Singh, M.P., 'The Merchant Prince of Surat', P. I. H. C., Bhubaneswar, 1977, p. 293.

[129] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 28.

[130] Ibid.

[131] 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', p. 409.

[132] Ibid.

[133] *Sunni Vahora*, pp. 27-28; 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, sixteenth-eighteenth centuries', p. 409.

[134] 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries', p. 409.

commander returned the ship to Rustom with all its cargo and he returned to Surat by same ship. On his arrival Usman Chalebi entertained him and gave a robe of honour to him.[135]

Usman Chalebi also had a garden in which Mughal governors occasionally used to stay. When the acting governor Safdar Khan replaced by Tegh Beg Khan in 1748 A.D.and he had to leave the place, he spent around 20 days in his garden.[136]

The Chalebis were successfully absorbed in the Gujarati culture and they had the identity of wealthy and successful merchants.

Khojas:

The term *Khoja* is the form used in India for the Persian *khwaja* – "a rich or respectable person, a gentleman, an opulent merchant."[137]

Kareem Mehmud Master in his *Mahagujaratno Musalmano*, observes that khoja is a Turkish word, but in Persian it is pronounced '*kha'ja'* and written '*khwaja'*, which is used for poet, teacher and merchant:

> "'ખોજા' તુર્કી શબ્દ છે અને તે લકબરૂપે વપરાય છે. ફારસીમાં એ શબ્દનો ઉચ્ચાર 'ખા'જા' છે.
> લખવામાં તે 'ખ્વાજા' લખાય છે. તેનો અર્થ કવિ, શિક્ષક, વેપારી થાય છે."[138]

Khojas were settled approximately in whole of Gujarat and mainly in Saurashtra, Diu and Daman, Ahmadabad, Vadodara/Baroda and Surat.[139] It was the community of Shia Muslims.[140] (see Map-6)

According to testimony of *Khoja Vritant*, this community was divided into following seven divisions:[141]

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[135] 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries', p. 409.

[136] Ibid., p. 410.

[137] Enthoven, R.E., *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, 3 Vol., vol. II, Bombay, 1922, p. 217; Also see Campbell, James M., Gazetter of Bombay Presidency, Vol. IX, Part-II (*Gujarat Population: Musalmans and Parsis*), Bombay, 1899 (Reprint-1990), p. 36.

[138] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 183.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid., p. 127.

[141] *The Khoja Vritant*, p. 255, *Cf. The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, p. 223-24.

Septs of Khojas

1.Atlai – Khurasani	2.Badakhshani and Khurasani	3.Gujar – Gupti	4.Khedwaya – Momna
5.Mochi – Momna	6.Multani	7.Soni – Lohar	

At their initial settlement in the towns of Gujarat, the Khojas belonged to varied profession parched grain and fuel sellers, gold embroiders (*zaripuranas*), and bricklayers. Later they assumed a powerful position in such industries as ivory, horn, cotton, hide, mother of pearl, grain, spice, fishery, shark-fin, cotton seed, furniture, opium and silk traders. They enjoyed a good business reputation. They were identified as neat, clean, sober, thrifty and ambitious, enterprising trade and cool and resourceful. They were great travelers by land and sea, visited and settled in distant countries for purpose of trade.[142]

Khojas were Ismailias of the Nazarian sub-division, who separated in 1094 A.D. from the Mutaalian Ismailians on a question regarding the succession to the throne of the Fatimite Khilafat in Egypt.[143] The Indian Khojas believed that Hassan was the first of their Imams to send a missionary to India. The name of that missionary was – '*Nur Satagur*'[144]

According to the Khoja accounts – Nuruddin, or as they all called him Nur Satagur, came from Deilam to Pattan (Gujarat),when that country was governed by a Hindu prince, apparently the Solanki Bhima II (A.D. 1179-1242). He is said to have returned to Persia shortly after converting the Hindu ruler of Pattan secretly to his faith.[145] On his second visit to Gujarat he married the daughter of Raja Surchand, chief or Governor of Navsari. His success as a proselytiser and his wealth exciting the envy of his followers, he was killed by Chach, one of his two disciples while he was absorbed in *Samadhi* or contemplation.[146]

The name Nur Satagur "teacher of pure light" which he adopted in addition to his own name Nuruddin or Nurshah and the practice of the Hindu abstraction or *Samadhi*,

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[142] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, op. cit., p. 230.

[143] Ibid., II, p. 217; Also see *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 184.

[144] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, p. 219.

[145] The Khoja hymn called *Ramat* in the '*Khoja Vritant*', p. 155, *Cf. The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* p. 219.

[146] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, p. 219-20.

show the process by which the first Ismailia preachers succeeded in converting Hindus.[147]

> "નૂર સત્ગર, અર્થાત સતગુરુ એ નામ તેમને પોતાના મૂળ નામ નુરુદ્દિન અથવા નુરશાહ ઉપરાંત ધારણ કર્યું હતું. આ હિન્દુશાહી નામ અને સમાધિની હિંદુ વિધિ ઉપરથી સમજાય છે કે ઈસ્માઈલી સંપ્રદાય શરુ ઉપદેશકોએ હિન્દુઓને ઇસ્લામમાં આણવા માટે કેવા ઈલાજો યોજવાથી ફતેહ મેળવી હતી."[148]

Another preacher of the community was Sadruddin, later on he adopted a Hindu name Satdev and Harchand.

> "ઈસ્માઈલી સંપ્રદાયના બીજા એક ઉપદેશક સદ્દીને પણ સતદેવ અંદ હરચંદ જેવા હિંદુ નામ ધારણ કાર્ય હતા."[149]

A later segment of this community was of Kashmir origin. Ferishta, mentions in his text, the *chaks* were originally a race of sun-worshippers, who called themselves *Pausharias* – the people of light. During the reign of Fateh Shah of Kashmir (A.D. 1458-59), these *chaks* were converted to the Ismaili's faith by a missionary to India. This was Shams-ud-Din, the second Ismailia missionary to India. According to *Khoja Ramat* he was capable to do miracles.[150]

Memons:

Memons was another community of Muslim merchants of Gujarat. According to Tirmizi the Memons were converted from the *Lohanas*[151] of Thatta in Sindh. Persecuted by the local people, one group immigrated to Haalar in Saurashtra and they were known

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[147] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, p. 220; Also see *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 204.

[148] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 204.

[149] Ibid.

[150] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay,* II, p. 220.

[151] Also referred as *luvana* this community originated in Sindh and Punjab. They considered as Vaishyas in Hindu caste-system. But they favour a mythical origin as members of *Kshatriyas.* Some of them believed that they belonged to the *Rathor* clan of *Kshatriyas.*

as *Halai* Memons. The second group inhabited Kutch and came to be designated as *Kutchi* Memons, while the third group settled down at Surat and was known as *Surati* Memons.[152] (see Map-6) Karim Mehmud Master supports this view but he mentions different names for their divisions based on the area where they resided. According to them, the divisions of Memons were:

Major Septs of Memons

Karim Mehmud Master	S.A.I. Tirmizi
1. ***Kutchhi Memon***: who were settled in Sindh and Kutchh	***Kutchhi Memon***
2. ***Halai Memon***: who resided in the Haalar region of Kathiawar.	***Halai Memon***
3. ***Dholka Memon***: they were the residents of Dholka near Ahmadabad.	***Surati Memon***
4. ***Bhavanagari Memon***: residents of Bhavanagar in Kathiawar.	
5. ***Veravala Memon***: who lived in Veraval (south of Kathiawar).	

In Surat the Memons were a thriving community, but as this place was gradually outrivaled by Bombay they had moved southwards. In Bombay, they were engaged in every branch of trade and commerce, from shop keeping to retail dealing and brokerage. The Memons co-operated with the British traders and emerged as enterprising businessmen in the nineteenth century. They settled down in big cities of India and transacted business in all types of goods.[153]

Karim Mehmud supplies a list of 59 surnames (*atak / nukh*)[154] out of 84 *Lohanas* of 1400 A.D.:

Surnames (*Atak / Nukh*) of Lohana

1.Oudani	2.Aahiya	3.Ambiya	4.Aasakirah	5.Ad thakkar
6.Bhatadi	7.Bariya	8.Gakhar	9.Gatha	10.Ghandi
11.Ghadtar	12.Ganda	13.Gajan	14.Mathiya	15.Gulbadan
16.Chokha sona	17.Chandnadi	18.Sunchak	19.Gideman	20.Chakiya
21.Cheede	22.Chaduputra	23.Chandan	24.Jobanputra	25.Khora
26.Lodhiya	27.Ladak	28.Majithiya	29.Manek	30.Medwar

[152] 'Muslim Merchants of Medieval Gujarat', p. 64.

[153] Ibid.

[154] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 252.

31.Naram	32.Naarwani	33.Khobariya	34.Paliya	35.Panthi
36.Parkariya	37.Madan	38.Popat	39.Rai	40.Rakunraiya
41.Raichanna	42.Reena	43.Rariya	44.Rokhna	45.Ruparel
46.Sakarni	47.Sabagar	48. Sendhawa	49.Somiya	50.Sonagila
51.Somiyar	52.Thakarala	53.Tanna	54.Thaura	55.Kotak
56.Dhakad	57.Katish	58.Kariya	59.Khakkhar	

He also furnishes list of around 40 surnames of Memons. He found only one surname namely ***Lodhiya*** was similar to the surnames of Lohanas of that period[155] :-

Surnames of Memons

1.Bhayani	2.Lila	3.Halari	4.Palwala	5.Machhiyara
6.Suraiya	7.Dabbawala	8.Bawani	9.Chidimar	10.Jodiya
11.Khochiya	12.Tebha	13.Malmal	14.Gaadit	15.Zaveri
16.Makrani	17.Gajiyani	18.Masidiya	19.Vaghariya	20.Laakhani
21.Chhotani	22.Shobhani	**23.Lodhiya**	24.Madani	25.Motiwala
26.Vahevaariya	27.Shivani	28.Matmala	29.Saadhuani	30.Paadela
31.Motiyar	32.Katiya	33.Kamdar	34.Kudtha	35.Zuda
36.Khadwaai	37.Nakhuda	38.Munda	39.Chatani	40.Parekh

Memons also played an important role in the various dimensions of Gujarati trade.

Parsis:

Parsi as their name implies, are of Persian descent. The word 'Parsi' means the men from Pars or Fars, ancient Parsa, Greek Persepolis, in southern Iran. The origin of this small community has been traced to the Indo-European brand of Aryans.[156] They came to India in order to seek peace and freedom to practice their faith.[157]

There are very few sources to know about the Parsi community in earlier period and their history. Most of the works are modern. The only contemporary source is *Kissa-i-Sanjan* in Persian language. Apart from this some regional sources of medieval

[155] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 253.

[156] *The Parsis*, op. cit., p. 1.

[157] Ibid., p. 10.

Gujarat are very helpful for this purpose, like- *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas* and *Parsi Vishayo*.

After the fall of Persian Empire to the Arabs in A.D. 651, they came to Gujarat. Muslim historians of the early Medieval Ages also testify to the advent of Iranian Zoroastrians in Gujarat.[158]

According to *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas* - Parsis' main settlement area was Cambay and they came in India in 636 A.D. They mainly resided in the area of Komari, near river Mahi during 942-997 A.D.

> "ખંભાતમાં મુખ્ય વસ્તી પારસીયોની હતી. પારસીયો ઈ.સ. ૬૩૬ માં હિન્દુસ્તાનમાં આવી, માહી નદીને કાંઠે કુમારી ક્ષેત્રમાં વસતા હતા. (૯૪૨-૯૭) થમ આવનાર ખુબ કમાયાથી તેઓ જાત્થાબંધ આવ્યા."[159]

According to Nanvutty - Iranians were forcibly converted to Islam under the Arabs.[160] Those who retained their ancient faith were persecuted, and fled to the mountains of Kohistan in Khorasan. According to tradition, they stayed there for a hundred years. According to some historians they arrived at Diu (in Kathiawar), and stayed there for nineteen years. They again set their sail, for the new destination Sanjan (a small fishing village) on the west coast of Gujarat, where they landed around 785 A.D., where the local Hindu Raja- Jadhav Rana offered them shelter.[161]

The solitary surviving document on the early history of Parsis is the '*Kissa-i-Sanjan*', a chronicle in Persian couplets by Behman Kaikobad Sanjan '*Dastur*'. Behman Kaikaobad was the son of Merji Rana, who was selected as '*Dastur*' (high preist) of the community in 1579 A.D. at Navsari. He was invited by Mughal Emperor, due to his interest in Zoroastrian religion. A land grant of two hundred acres at Navsari was granted at this occasion as a mark of royal favour.[162] In the year 1595 A.D., Akbar ordered another free grant of one hundred acres of land at Navsari to Kaikobad, who succeeded his father as the *Dastur*.[163]

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[158] *The Parsis*, p. 38.

[159] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, op. cit., p. 18.

[160] *The Parsis*, p. 39.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Karaka, Dosabhai Framji, *History of the Parsis*, 2 Vols., II, London, 1884, p. 3.

[163] *History of the Parsis*, II, op. cit., p. 4.

As per information contained in '*Kissa-i-Sanjan*', when the Parsi approached Jadhdav Rana, the local ruler of Sanjan, for permission to settle there, five conditions[164] were imposed on them. These were as follows:-

- The explanation of the Zoroastrian religion to the raja, by the Parsi high priest, who accompanied the refugees and had safeguarded the sacred fire all the way from Iran to India;
- The adoption of Gujarati as their mother tongue;
- The adoption of saree by Parsi women;
- The surrender of all weapons; and
- The Parsi wedding processions be held in the dark of the night (this last may have been a request from the refugees themselves, a protective measure to avoid the attention of other communities to an alien community in their midst.).

Between the 8th and fifteenth centuries, the Parsis settled in the small towns of Gujarat coast. As described in '*Kissa...*'- "Some turned to Vankanir and some took their way to Broach, some went to Vairav (Veraval).., some arrived at Anklesar (Ankleshwar), and proceeded towards the city of Cambay. Some took their kit to Navsari..."[165] They adopted varied professions as farmers and agriculturists, fruit growers, toddy planters, carpenters and weavers. They were not only excellent weavers but they gave India three of their most ancient crafts[166], viz

- The *Surati Ghat* (a soft silk with a Satin finish on one side),
- The *Garo*,
- *Tanchoi*

(The *Garo* and *Tanchoi* crafts were originally imported by the Parsis from China).[167]

Parsis were well versed in small-scale banking and in shop-keeping. The famous perfumed oil[168] of Navsari is associated with Parsi enterprise and finds mention in the

[164] *The Parsis*, p. 39.

[165] Ibid., p. 41.

[166] Ibid., p. 42.

[167] Ibid.

'*Ain-i-Akbari*'.[169] Because of their business tactics and earnings in Cambay, Hindus were unable to get suitable conditions for their business and they left this place.

> "..થમ આવનાર ખુબ કમાયાથી તેઓ જાત્થાબંધ આવ્યા. પરંતુ તેઓની તાભાત નહિ ફાવવાથી હિન્દુઓને તે શહેર છોડવું પડ્યું હતું......"[170]

A new era begins in the history of Parsis with the advent of Europeans in India. Due to the presence of Europeans, the Parsis found themselves playing the role of entrepreneurs and mediators between different vested interests. The first British factory was built at Surat in 1608 A.D. the Dutch built their factory in 1617 A.D. These factories employed Parsis as their chief brokers.[171] The Parsis of seventeenth century India had not begun to move into inter-regional, trade however they were heavily involved in related activities.[172] Hamilton observes about the Parsis "*they were very industrious and diligent in their vocation, are bred to traders and manuring ground. They are good carpenters or shipbuilders, exquisite in the weaver's trade and embroidery, which may be seen in the rich at lasses, battadars and jemewaars made by them as well as fine Baroach (Broach) and Nunsari (Navsari) Bastas (Baftas) that come from their manufactories. They work well in ivory and agate; and are excellent cabinet-makers. They distill strong waters, but that they do clandestinely, because that trade is prohibited by government....*"[173] Mandelslo remarks that- "*they (Parsis) lived by growing tobacco, drawing palm-juice, banking, trading, shop-keeping and the practice of crafts.*"[174]

An outstanding example of their commercial activities is Sheth Rustom Manek of Surat (1635-1721 A.D.) who acted as broker to the English factory at Surat, agent of

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[168] *Ain*, II, p. 123.

[169] *Ain*, I, p. 193.

[170] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, p. 18.

[171] *The Parsis*, p. 51.

[172] White, D.L., *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English India Company in Eighteenth Century India*, New Delhi, 1995, p. 24.

[173] Hamilton, Capt. Alexender, *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, 2 Vols., II, London, 1739 (Reprint- New Delhi, 1995), p. 95.

[174] Mandelslo, p. 8.

raja of Battam at Singapore, and commercial agent and interpreter to the Portuguese at Surat.[175]

John Fryer who came to Surat in 1670s observes that- "Parsis were rather husbandmen than traders...they supply the marine with carts drawn by oxen, the ships with wood and water.[176] They were, however, in the forefront of the shipbuilding industry in Surat. Cursetji and Khurshed were two most renowned shipbuilders during the latter seventeenth century.[177]

When Catherina of Braganza married Charles II of England, the Portuguese handed over Bombay to the British as wedding gift in 1661 A.D.. At this time weavers, foremen and carpenters were in great demand. Surat supplied many of these craftsmen at the request of the first British Governer of Bombay, Gerald Aungier.[178]

Parsis were the first to earn into the reputation as constructors of dockyards and as shipbuilders. In 1700 A.D., the East India Company made the Surat docks at Tapi. Their maintenance was under the control of Parsis. Particularly Lavji Nusserwanji Wadia (1702-1774 A.D.), a shipbuilders and foreman at the Surat dockyards. He served for the company for about 35 years at Surat. Lavji was invited to Bombay to build three docks: in 1754 A.D., in 1762 A.D. and in 1765 A.D. respectively.[179]

The Parsis were the earliest to enter modern industries as compared to other merchant communities. They were able to maintain their lead in this field until well after First World War.[180] Parsis started trade with China and Burma. Banaji Limji (1654-1734 A.D.), a Parsi from Surat, came to Bombay in 1690 A.D., and grew prosperous. His descendant, Framji Cowasji Banaji (1767-1852 A.D.) started trade with Burma and China, and amassed enough wealth to own forty ships.[181] The first Parsi who sailed to China for trade was Hirji Jivanji in 1756 A.D. The Parsis carried a flourishing trade with Canton, Macao, Hongkong and Shanghai.[182]

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[175] *The Parsis*, p. 51.

[176] Fryer, John, *A new Account of East India and Persia-1672-1681*, Ed. William Crooke, 3 Vols., I, London, 1909 (reprint- New Delhi, 1992), pp. 29-56.

[177] *EFI*, 1670-70, p. 233.

[178] *The Parsis*, p. 86.

[179] Ibid.

[180] Guha, Amalendu, 'More about the Parsi Sheths: Their roots, Entrepreneurship, and Comprador role - 1650-1918', *Business Communities in India*, pp. 111-112.

[181] *The Parsis*, p. 87.

[182] Ibid.

Sir Jamshed Jejeebhoy (1785-1859 A.D.) proposed and established agencies in Madras, Bengal, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Egypt and England. He bought a fleet of seven cargo ships and six smaller vessels for coastal trade. Jamshedji became a leading citizen of Bombay. He was one of the first four traders of the 'Bombay Parsi Panchayat'.[183] His '*Kholaseh-i-Panchayat*', written in Gujarati, is full of shrewd wisdom on how the Panchayat should be run.[184]

S. M. Desai observes, in one of the chapters (*Parsi Atako*[185]) of his book '*Parsi Vishayo*' (in Gujarati) that we never found any division or sort of caste/ sub-caste among the Parsis, however variety of their surnames are there and surnames originally designated occupation/ estate/ place of residence or some particular thing/ event that related to the person.[186] In fifteenth century, the Parsis of Navasari were known as '*Desais*' of Navasari, they were farmers of large territories and enjoyed great influence under the successive Muslim and Maratha Governments. Chang Asa, a wealthy Parsi, was the first *Desai*.[187]

In the area of Navasari, Surat and Broach, *Desai* was the most popular *atak* of Parsis during Mughal period. In Navasari, there were different families of *Desais* and these families were categorized in *Mota desai* or Big Desais and *Polya Desai* or false *Desais*:

> "વળી મોગલ શહેન્શાહાત વેણાએ ઘણી અટકો નવસારી, સુરત અને ભરૂચ ખાતે જણાય છે .... નવસારીમાં "મોટા દેસાઈ" અને "પોલ્યા દેસાઈ" એવા બે જુદા જુદા ખાનદાનો મોગલાઈ વખતથી છે."[188]

In some other places they adopted their surnames based on English names, like- McFerson, Nicholson, Dalas, Satin, Spencer, Palkos, Dalal, Dandas, Morrison, Bonapart, Panter, Palenteen, Paatak, Baptist and Minis etc.[189]

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[183] *The Parsis*, p. 88

[184] Ibid.

[185] *Atak* is a Gujarati word which means – surname.

[186] Desai, S.M., 'Parsi Atako', *Parsi Vishayo*, Navasari, 1914, p. 1.

[187] *History of the Parsis*, II, p. 4.

[188] 'Parsi Atako', *Parsi Vishayo*, op.cit., p. 7.

[189] Ibid., p. 8.

The Parsis came in India for the sake of security and to preserve their ancient culture. They settled in different towns and villages of Gujarat and present region of Maharashtra. Gradually they mixed-up with local people and exchanged some customs and cultures. They contributed in different areas of profession, like- initially they were pure agriculturists and craftsmen, then they emerged as merchants and shipbuilders, in the second half of the eighteenth century they started growing as industrialists.

Ghanchis:

The *Ghanchis* were oil merchants. They are spread all over Gujarat. They adopted Rajput tribal surnames, such as – *Gohil*, *Jhala*, *Padhiar*, *Parmar*, *Solanki* etc., however then claim of descent from the Banias of Modhera in north Gujarat. They were divided into various groups based on the name of different towns, like – *Ahmadabadi*, *Khambhati*, *Patani*, *Bharchi*, *Modh*, *Sidhpuria*, *Champaneri*, *Pancholi*, *Surati* etc.

Ghanchis trace themselves from *Modh* Ghanchis, and were probably originally one group. The *Modh* Ghanchis of Sidhpur who settled in Surat become *Sidhpuria Modh* Ghanchis and inter-marriages cease in consequence. Among the above divisions, *Modh* and *Sidhpuria* rank highest. The other divisions could take food cooked by above two. However, these two being highest groups did not inter-dine with the rest.[190]

The highest concentration of Ghanchis was in Baroda followed by Panchmahal. Traditionally, Godhra was the home-town of the Ghanchis. However a large number came from Saurashtra.[191] Ghanchis mostly kept to their hereditary occupation of pressing and selling oil extracted from sesame, coconut, castor and linseed. Some earn a living by lending money. Others sold grain, fruits, vegetables, sweet meats, milk and clarified butter. They were also involved in tillage, labour; and in Kutchh by making bamboo basket.[192]

Ghanchis follow the Hindu law of inheritance. They adopted varried religious learnings. They were *Kabirpanthi*, *Ramanandi*, *Ramsanchi*, *Saiva*, *Swaminarayan*, *Vallabhacharya*, and worshipers of *Bahucharaji*. Their family Godess was at Modhera. They observed the regular rituals of Hindu fasts and feasts.[193]

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[190] Enthoven, R.E., *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, 3 Vol., Vol. II, Bombay, 1922, p. 1.

[191] *Muslim Communities in Mughal Gujarat*, p. 70.

[192] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 2.

[193] Ibid.

The Itinerant Merchants:

This category included European merchants and Companies. They visited this region for the purpose of trade and returned to their native countries. Fortunately we have rich sources and records, maintained and left by them. We can tap information to understand their attitude towards business. such sources are- volumes of *English Factories in India* (new and old series), *Letter Received* and travelogues Tome Píres, Barbosa and Ralph Fitch etc. Apart from these sources, some regional sources like *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat* and *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas* also furnish considerable information.

Portuguese: India had maintained commercial contacts with the western world since ancient and medieval times, but direct naval contact with western world was established in 1496 A.D. At this time Portuguese navigator Vasco de Gama reached Calicut. Though the Portuguese never established any territorial empire in India, but they possessed some ports on the west coast. Their prime aim was to dominate marine trade with India.

In sixteenth century, Portuguese created disturbances in the trade of Cambay. They damaged ships going to Africa and Arab. Their trade with South India and Archepalegona Island was almost closed. Local merchants lost their important port – Diu, and profit was transferred into the hands of European merchants from local merchants.

> "સોળમાં સૈકામાં પોર્ટુગીઝ લોકોને ખંભાતના વ્યાપારમાં ખલેલ કર્યું. આફ્રિકા અને અરબસ્તાનના કિનારા પર આવેલા તેમનો બંદરોનો કરવાના આવ્યો. અને દક્ષીણ હિન્દ અને પૂર્વી અર્ચીપેલેગોના દ્વીપો સાથેનો તેમનો વ્યાપાર બંધ પડયો હતો. જેમ જેમ વખત (૧૫૨૮-૨૯) અને તેઓની નૌકાઓ નાશ થયો. અને દીવ ગયું ત્યારથી તો ગુજરાતના મ્હોટા વ્યાપારનો ફાયદો દેશી વ્યાપારિયો પાસેથી પરદેશી વ્યાપારીઓના હાથમાં ગયો."[194]

[194] *Khabhat Shaherno Itihas,* p. 23.

Barbosa and Pires mention that ships regularly sailed from Surat to Bengal.[195] When ships came back from Bengal, they had to pass through Cambay and this trade was very profitable.[196] The Portuguese supremacy disturbed existing trade and they assumed the role of supplying Gujarati goods to Bengal and vice versa. Due to this development, Goa became the chief port for visiting ships from Bengal.[197] The Portuguese became important carriers. Thus in this sector direct participation of Gujaratis and Bengalis was eliminated.[198] Portuguese also participated in Gujarat-Malabar trade.[199] The local merchants of Surat (especially of Machhiwada[200]) also faced problems from the ships of Portuguese, who started imposing excise duties on them. Later on they became big merchants and influenced the nawab of city and took permission to establish a factory over here.[201] Portuguese factory was popularly called 'Latina' in Surat.

"ફીરન્ગીઓની કોઠી - એ મકાનો લાટીના નામથી પ્રસિદ્ધ છે....."[202]

Gujarati ports used to export horses to the coastal region of Maharashtra and Goa, and earned a huge profit. The Portuguese realized the potentiality of this trade and put an end to their imports to Goa from Gujarat.[203]

Fitch mentions that the ships were not required to pay any custom duty at Goa, if their cargoes included horses. If cargoes did not have horses, they had to pay custom duties on all the merchandise.[204]

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[195] Barbosa, Duarte, *Book of Barbosa: An Account of The Countries Bordering to The Indian Ocean And Their Inhabitants*, 3 Vols., I, Ed. Mansel Longworth Dames, Indian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1918-21 (Reprint-1982), p. 146; Pires, I, p. 45.

[196] Barbosa, II , op. cit., p. 145.

[197] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat,* pp. 92-93.

[198] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat,* p. 93.

[199] Ibid., p. 91.

[200] Machchiwada was a popular area in Surat and fishermen lived here that is why this place was called '*Machchiwada'*. Big ships from Rander were used to loaded and unloaded here. *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 10.

[201] Ibid.

[202] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 6.

[203] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat,* p. 85.

[204] Fitch, Ralph, *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Eds. William Foster, Low Price Publication, Delhi, 2007 (reprint), p. 12.

According to Duarto Barbosa Portuguese purchased copper from Chaul.[205] Pearson observes that – "*An area favoured by private Portuguese traders for their operations was Gujarat, especially the town of Cambay, trade to which had started by at least 1509 A.D. This trade in fact flourished despite opposition to it from both church and political authorities, the former because Portuguese there would have no opportunity to take the sacraments, the latter because they could serve as hostages in the event of war between Gujarat and the Portuguese. When Akbar arrived in Cambay in 1572, he found 50-60 Portuguese in residence, although most of those normally resident had fled to avoid the war. In 1594 there were about 100 Portuguese families in Cambay. Many men apparently settled there permanently and married local women, ……………………… These Portuguese were mainly engaged in buying Gujarati goods to be sent to Goa on the 'cafilas', and from there distributed all over Asia, and to Lisbon.*"[206]

Trade was not an easy task for Portuguese because Dutch and British were ready to give them a tough competition in India. Portuguese supremacy was complete when Mughals started paying tolls to Portuguese for the safe passage of their vessels.[207] They were at the mercy of Portuguese on the high seas because without their passes Mughals ships could not go to Mecca on pilgrimage. For these passes they Mughals had to pay 3000 to 8000 *mahmudis*. Akbar agreed in 1573 A.D. not to shelter Malabar pirates and in return he got a free pass of one year for Red Sea voyage.[208] In 1581 A.D. *cartazes* were issued to Akbar's ship for Red Sea voyage. Throughout the seventeenth century, the Mughals got one free *cartaz* per year. Even Aurangzeb took *cartaz* for his ships.[209]

Portuguese navy was at its zenith at this time and a ship without acquiring *Parwana* from them would definitely become victim of their loot. When English got the permission of trade in India from Mughals, then Portuguese started creating problems for the ships going from India to Persia and Arab.

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[205] Barbosa, I, p. 160.

[206] *The Portuguese in India*, I, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

[207] Mathew, K. M., *History of the Portuguese Navigation in India (1497-1600)*, Delhi, 1987, p. 138.

[208] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 100.

[209] *History of the Portuguese Navigation in India (1497-1600)*, op. cit., p. 138.

"એ વખતે ફીરન્ગીઓનું દરિયાઈ જોર એટલું છે કે જે વહાણોને ફીરન્ગીનો પરવાનો ના હોય તેને તેઓ લુટી લેતા. હવે મોગલ જો અંગ્રેજોને વેપાર કરવાની છૂટ આપે તો ફીરન્ગીયો ચહિડાયી જાય અને ખાર રાખી હિન્દુસ્તાનથી ઈરાન અરબસ્તાન જતા વહાણોને લુટી લે."[210]

Trade was important to all the Portuguese living in Asia. There were broadly four occupational groups:

Occupational Groups of Portuguese

1.Officials	Including military and naval commanders.
2.Soldiers	Normally unmarried young men.
3.Casados	Settled or married men.
4.Clerics	

All four of these engaged in trade on their own account, either directly or through an agent, though naturally the *casados* were most prominent.[211]

Dutch: The biggest change in the nature of the overland trade of Gujarat occurred when Dutch and English arrived in India. They were keen to export Indian commodities to Europe as well as to other parts of the world. They were organizationally and materially better equipped than the Portuguese. The base of their operations was to explore inland market.[212]

The United East India Company of the Netherlands, which was established in 1602 A.D., played an important role in checking the power of the Portuguese. They were also interested in carrying on trade of spices.[213] The Dutch were interested in textile and spices in Gujarat and they tried to do business like British, but Portuguese destroyed their dream in 1606 A.D.[214] In 1607 A.D. the Dutch began to flourish in Gujarat after

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[210] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 16.

[211] Danvers, Fredrick Charles, *The Portuguese in India*, 2 Vols., I, Delhi, 2006 (reprint) (first published in 1894), p. 81.

[212] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 127.

[213] Raychoudhary, S.C., *Social Cultural and Economic History of India (Modern Times)*, Surjeet Publication, Delhi, 1995, p. 2.

[214] *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, op. cit., p. 32.

the arrival of Broake as the head of the Dutch East India Company in India.[215] They were permitted to establish a factory at Surat[216], Cambay, Broach, Baroda and Ahmadabad two years later.[217] Dutch merchants arrived at Surat in 1616 A.D.[218] At the time when the Dutch established their factory at Surat in 1616 A.D., Gujarat was the major source of products like cotton cloth, which could be exchanged for spices in the Indonesian region.[219] In 1617 A.D., they established permanent factory at Cambay and their trade flourished there by 1623 A.D.

> "ઈ.સ. ૧૬૧૭ માં ડચ લોકોએ તેઓની કોઠી ખંભાતમાં સ્થાપી અને સને ૧૬૨૩ માં તેઓએ
> ફતેમંદ વેપાર ધમધોકાર ચલાવ્યો."[220]

In Surat, port and factory of Dutch were situated near Tapi River. There was a small wall on the main bank of Tapi. Government made a fortress on that place.[221] Factory was situated near the *Athwana Darwajo* (a jungle was there) and a cantonment was also there in an open ground in the west of the city.[222]

The Dutch followed the English example and began to grant licenses to Gujarati ships going to the Red Sea area.[223] In 1621 A.D., they captured two ships (one from Diu and another from Mandvi) in Red Sea. Ship of Diu returning from Ethiopia was seized by the Dutch. It contained gold and ivory.[224]

During the second half of the seventeenth century coffee became popular and Europeans were interested to import it, especially English and Dutch.[225] In 1680s, the

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[215] *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 38.

[216] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 17.

[217] Rajyagor, S.B., *History of Gujarat*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 250.

[218] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 17.

[219] *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in Eighteenth Century India*, p. 10.

[220] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, p. 27.

[221] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiat*, p. 5.

[222] Ibid., p. 6.

[223] *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 300.

[224] Moreland, W.H., 'Pieter Van Dam Broake at Surat', JIH, Vol. X (part-III), December 1931, p. 243. *Cf. Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 29.

[225] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 37.

Dutch began buying Arabian coffee in Surat.[226] Their purchases at Surat increased, especially after they closed their factory at Mocha in 1684 A.D.[227] in 1635, they brought copper from Japan.[228]

The Dutch made Batavia (Jakarta) their main centre of activity. Throughout the second half of the seventeenth century, the Dutch continued to transport Javan sugar from Batavia to Surat.[229]

British: The first attempt was made by English to trade with India in 1583 A.D. Creech, Weeds and Newberry – three English merchants came via Persian Gulf to Gujarat, with a letter of Queen Elizabeth to meet ruler of Cambay, Akbar.[230]

After inflicting a naval defeat on the Spanish Armada in 1588 A.D. the British acquired naval supremacy. This encouraged certain merchant adventurers of London to form a company and received a charter from Queen Elizabeth I of England on 31 December 1600 A.D., under this charter a company was established with the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants to the East indies". After some mercantile expeditions had been dispatched to India, a ship named 'Hector' under the command of Captain Hawkins, arrived at the mouth of river Tapi in August 1608 A.D.[231] During the initial years of existence, the company undertook 'separate voyages' and distributed the profits from each voyage among the subscriber.[232]

Regular trade with India was started in 1608 A.D. when the company tried to establish a factory at Surat. The British captain Hawkins tried to get the permission from the Mughal Emperor Jahangir for this purpose, but the efforts failed due to the hostility of the Portuguese.[233] In January 11th, 1612 A.D., Captain Baste came at the court of Jahangir with a request to resolve issues with Portuguese. The Mughal emperor ordered an *Ailchi* or *Vakil* should stay in the Mughal court in order to work as a

[226] Glamann, Kristoff, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, The Hague, 1958, p. 187. *Cf. Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 37.

[227] *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, op. cit., p. 186. *Cf. Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 37.

[228] *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 184.

[229] *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, p. 152. *Cf. Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 62.

[230] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas*, p. 25.

[231] Rajyagor, op. cit., pp. 248-249.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Rajyagor, p. 248.

mediator between Mughal officials and English merchants. He was also to make the Mughal emperor aware about the conflicts with Portuguese.

> "સને ૧૬૧૨ ની જનેવારીયે જયારે કપ્તાન બેસ્ટે જહાંગીર બાદશાહ પાસે સનદ લખાવી લીધી ત્યારે ફીરન્ગીયો હાથ ઘસતા રહ્યા. એ સનાદની મતલબ આકે ઇન્ગ્લંડનો એક ઐલચી (વકીલ) મોગલની દરબાર માં રહે; અને અંગ્રેજોને કોઈ દુખ દે અથવા તેઓને હક ઠુંબાડે તો તેવા કામનો ફેસલો થોડે ખર્ચે વ્હે લો થાય. ....."[234]

In 1612 A.D., two of the English vessels reached Surat and inflicted a defeat on the Portuguese fleet.[235] A conflict occurred in the January 1614 A.D. between English and Portuguese. The Portuguese lost their 350 people.[236] The English and Dutch made Surat the focal point of their activities. This was done because the Portuguese based themselves in Diu and Daman. They could not interfere with the shipping at Surat.[237] In 1613 A.D., the English succeeded in securing permission from Jahangir to establish their first factory at Surat[238] and a factory at Cambay as well.

> "ઈ. સ ૧૬૧૩ માં દિલ્લી ના જહાંગીર બાદશાહ તરફથી ખંભાતમાં અંગ્રેજ લોકોને કોઠી સ્થાપનની પરવાનગી મળી."[239]

In Surat, English factory was established near the house of Mulla Badkani (a hospital was also in close proximity). This place was used for trade from 1612 A.D. to 1800 A.D.

> "અંગ્રેજની કોઠીનું મકાન મુલ્લા બડ્કીની જ્યાં હસ્પીતાલ હતી તે ઠેકને હતું...."[240]

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[234] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiat,* p. 16.

[235] Ibid., p. 16.

[236] Ibid., p. 17.

[237] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat,* p. 153.

[238] Rajyagor, p. 3.

[239] *Khambhat Shaherno Itihas,* p. 26.

[240] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiat,* p. 6.

The English were interested in purchasing textiles for the markets of south-east Asia.[241] Gujarat offered them a wide selection. Hence they chose to secure the internal markets of the province.[242]

The British continuously maintained a full complement of personnel viz. president, chaplain, factors, writers and apprentices since 1613 A.D. These men were responsible for ordering and gathering the company's investment or yearly stock of Indian goods destined for England.[243]

In 1615 A.D. Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador arrived at Surat[244] and obtained some privileges including the right to establish factories in certain parts of the Empire. By virtue of this concession, the English established factories at Surat, Agra, Ahmadabad and Broach within the next four years.[245]

In 1622 A.D., the English decided to purchase goods for Red Sea region from the brokers of Khurram in Cambay and Baroda,[246] and in March 1623 A.D. Khurram decided to buy all the coral imported by the English in Gujarat. Khurram agreed to pay 1 lac *mahmudis* immediately, 1 lac in duration of one month and rest in September-October.[247] In 1662 A.D., the English hired a ship of Benidas for 10,000 *mahmudis* to transport their goods to Mocha.[248] But in the matter of purchasing, it was convenient and cheaper for the English to obtain Mocha goods at Surat from the local merchants. They made an arrangement with a merchant for the supply of coffee, myrrh and olibanum and agreed to pay 2% commission to him on receipt of goods at Surat.[249]

In 1642 A.D, first time the English sent coral from Surat to Goa for sale.[250] In October they sent coral, textile and lead.[251]

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[241] *Letter Received*, I, p. xxxii.

[242] *India from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 36.

[243] *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in eighteenth century India*, p. 10.

[244] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiat*, p. 17.

[245] Rajyagor, p. 250; *Social Cultural and Economic History of India (Modern Times)*, p. 3.

[246] *EFI*, 1622-23, p. 148.

[247] *EFI*, 1622-23, p. 205.

[248] *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 109.

[249] *EFI*, 1670-77, p. 216.

[250] *EFI*, 1642-45, p. 18.

[251] Ibid., p. 61.

By 1648 A.D. the English started exploring the Maharashtra coasts for a number of commodities. They brought coir from Goa.[252] They sold lead at Vengurla[253] and Rajapur had become the focal point of their activities.[254]

They purchased goods from Ahmadabad for sale in Bantam.[255] In 1658 A.D. they sent three ships to Bantam.[256] In 1664 A.D. they sent a ship to Bantam on behalf of Surat merchants.[257] Gujarati traders adopted this method because of Dutch hostility. They had to maintain commercial links with Bantam.[258] Many times the English ships carried goods on behalf of Gujarati merchants to Bantam. The English carried Japanese copper to Surat,[259] some of which was secured in Bantam.[260]

The collaboration between the English and the big merchants of Gujarat took place during the second half of the seventeenth century.

French: The French were also keen to acquire certain commercial benefits from India. The French were the last to enter the race for trade with India. French East India Company was established in 1664 A.D. This company was basically different from other European companies, because it was largely financed by the state. Their first factory was established in 1668 A.D. at Surat, followed by a factory at Masulipatanam in A.D. 1669.[261]

Austrian: A new company of European traders visited Surat during the early eighteenth century. This was the Ostend Company which was established in 1717 A.D. under the protection of the emperor of Austria. In 1719 A.D. this company sent a ship to trade at Surat. The heads of the Dutch and English factories joined doing 'all disservices possible' to the people of this ship. The deputy governor of the city however favoured them and two more ships that arrived in 1719 A.D. would seem to have been allowed to trade without disturbance. Later on opposition revived and in 1727 A.D. rose to such a

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[252] *EFI*, 1647-50.

[253] Ibid., p. 250.

[254] Ibid., pp. 15, 34, 194.

[255] *EFI*, 1651-54, p. 106; *EFI*, 1655-60, pp. 163, 199.

[256] *EFI*, 1655-60, p. 141.

[257] *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 74.

[258] *EFI*, 1670-77, p. 281.

[259] *EFI*, 1665-67, p. 2.

[260] *Commerce and Craft in Gujarat*, p. 67.

[261] *Social Cultural and Economic History of India (Modern Times)*, p. 4.

height that the Austrian emperor was forced to suspend the Ostend Company's charter.[262]

The European Companies had factories and stations at various places in India, along the eastern coast of Coromandel and in Bengal. There were also representatives at the principal market and production centres of inland trade. There were representatives of companies at Ahmadabad, Baroda, Agra, and Patna concerned with acquisition of the products of Mughal India and transporting them to Surat and Bengal for export.[263]

On the basis of information given in the *English Factories in India*[264], Tripta Verma believes that some private *karkhanas* also operated in Gujarat. Dutch and English both felt need for *karkhanas* of their own to control and organize their trade. They had saltpeter refineries at Ahmadabad.[265] They employed Indians in their *karkhanas*.[266] The "private" merchants of London were also there who attempted to make their fortune in Indian trade.[267]

In 1700 A.D., the European companies carried most extensive business in Gujarat. The European Indian companies were also a significant mercantile group in seventeenth century Gujarat, although their importance was not as great as it subsequently became in the eighteenth century.[268]

One can thus conclude that there were a number of Indian and foreign merchant communities operative in Gujarat. They acted sometimes in coordination and others independent of each other, for example, the Bania brokers helped the foreign merchants in various manners.

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[262] Gujarat State Gazetteer-Surat district, p. 140.

[263] *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in Eighteenth Century India*, pp. 10-11.

[264] *EFI*, 1618-21, pp. 149-152.

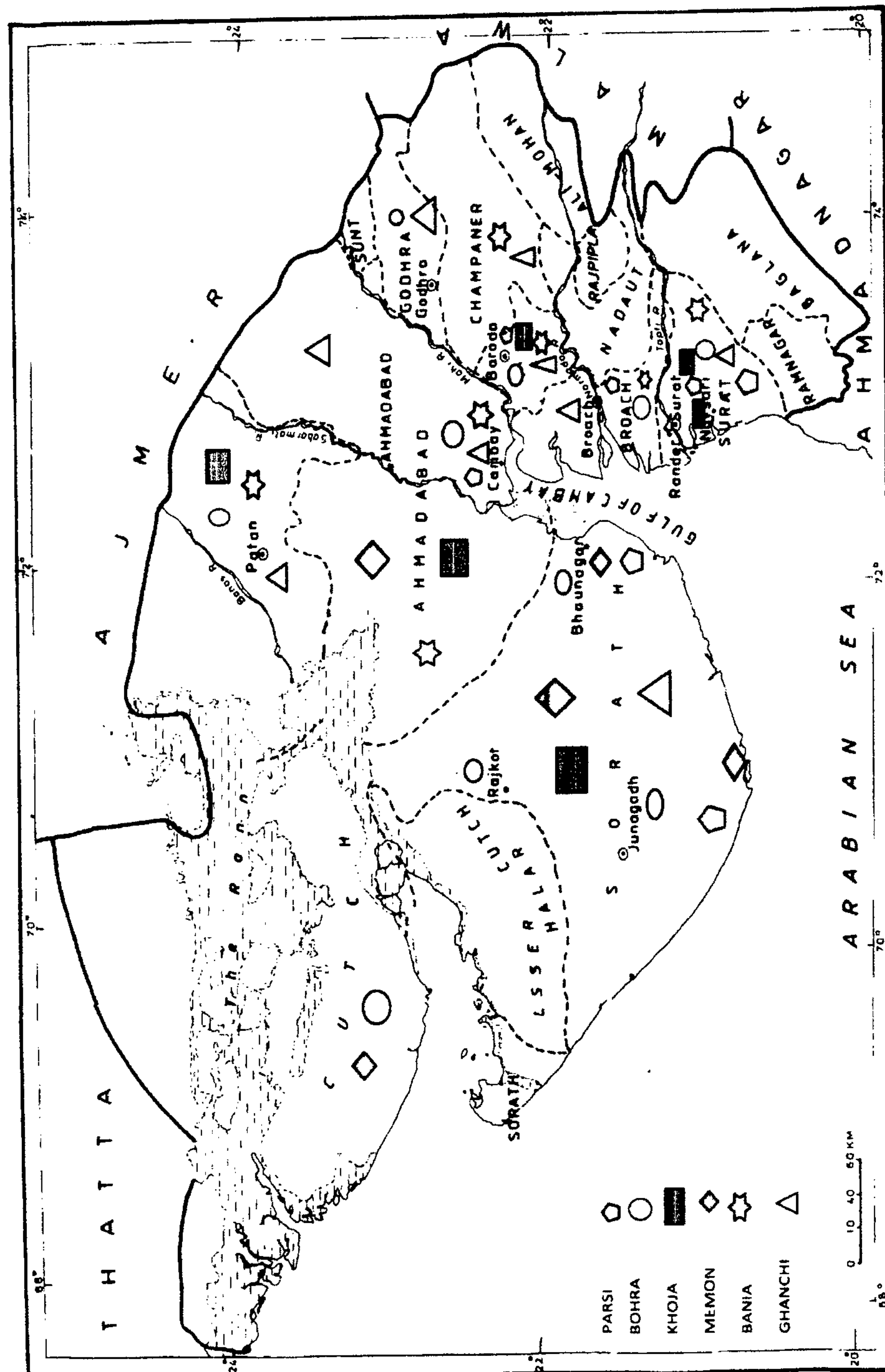
[265] Verma, Tripta, *Karkhanas under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb: A History in Economic Development*, Delhi, 1994, p. 101.

[266] *Karkhanas under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb*, op. cit., p. 103.

[267] *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in eighteenth century India*, p. 11.

[268] Ibid., p. 9.

Map - 6


REGIONWISE CONCENTRATION OF MERCHANT COMMUNITIES OF GUJARAT (16TH – 17TH c.)
THATTA
AJMER
MALWA
AHMADNAGAR
ARABIAN SEA
GULF OF CAMBAY
CUTCH
SORATH
AHMADABAD
GODHRA
CHAMPANER
BROACH
SURAT
BAGLANA
RAMNAGAR
NADAUT
RAJPIPLA
Patan
Cambay
Baroda
Broach
Surat
Rander
Bhaunagar
Rajkot
Junagadh
PARSI
BOHRA
KHOJA
MEMON
BANIA
GHANCHI

Chapter -3

Living Standard of Merchants of Gujarat

Having identified the major communities in an earlier chapter, it seems pertinent to assess the standard of living of the merchant community. This issue seems important because normally historians' concern centres around gauging the living standard of ruling classes or the lower classes. The merchant community has been glossed over in such treatments.

The conceptual frame suggests that one can assess a set of characteristics like education, life-style, entertainment, food habits, dress and ornaments, housing, status of women in order to determine the situation. This chapter entails an explorative study of such aspects in order to do proper justice to the social and cultural dimensions of merchant community operating in Gujarat. We can thus estimate and compare the necessities of the life of the merchant communities. The data of the same is found in rich profusion in the regional Gujarati sources.

As yet we have scanty information about the standard of living in Gujarat where the large majority of merchants lived. As we have seen in an earlier chapter the merchant community was segmented socially and economically and there was considerable inequality in the economic resource base.

Housing and Everyday life:

Europeans: It would be pertinent to initiate our discussion with foreign or itinerant merchants since they were the ones with most luxurious life-style. Mandelslo observes that there were foreign residents at Surat, viz. Arabs, Persians, Armenians, Turks and Jews, but none of these had such large and wealthy settlements as had the Dutch and the English settled at Surat.[1]

Surat acted as the nerve centre of all the English factories throughout. The factories at Agra, Isfahan, Masulipatanam, Cambay, Ahmadabad, Baroda, Broach and Dabul in Konkan, the secretaries in charge of these subordinate factories had to come once in a year to Surat, and give an account of their administration to the president.[2]

The spacious and well built houses belonging to the Dutch and English companies were called 'lodges'.[3] They had lodges, store-house, and adequate staff consisting of

[1] Mandelslo. p. 10.

[2] Ibid., p. 10.

[3] Mandelslo, p. 9; Thevenot, p. 22.

presidents, merchants and secretaries. They made the place 'one of the most eminent cities for commercial traffic of the entire east.'[4]

They had pretty apartments There were approximately hundred well off families in Surat.[5] The president managed the affairs of the East India Company with the help of 20 or 24 merchants and officers, under his superintendence.

The president held pivotal position at Surat, and strict discipline prevailed in temporal and religious divine services which were held twice a day, at six in the evening and at eight o'clock at night. On Sundays, service was held three times. Everyone had set of particular duties assigned to him and the hours were fixed both for work and for recreation.

Weekend Parties: Weekend get together are mentioned by Mandelslo, which reveals the home sickness of English merchants settled in India. On every Friday, after prayers a meeting took place, attended by the president and three other merchants who were related to him and who had left their wives in England. This day of the week being that of their departure from England, they treated it as a commemoration day on which they drank for their wives' health and well-being.

Mandelslo was invited to join these select meetings and tells us that some of the merchants took advantage to drink more than they could well carry, probably to draw their regrets.[6]

Garden resorts: The English owned fair garden outside the Surat, in which all the factors resorted on Sundays, after the religious sermon and sometimes on other days of the week. It is probable, that the whole day was spent in this garden in various enjoyments. One of the amusements on these occasions was target shooting, at which Mandelslo showed his expertise. He was able to earn a reward worth hundred *mahmudis* or five pounds sterling. This was followed by activity of plucking fruit.

They bathed in water tubs which were five feet deep water. Some Dutch women served and entertained them on such occasions. Mandelslo had little knowledge of

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[4] Mandelslo., p. 10.

[5] Thevenot, p. 22.

[6] Ibid, pp. 4-5.

English language so he could not participate in such picnics and could converse only with the president who knew Dutch.[7]

Banias: In Indian society we can get a glimpse of Bania community from De Jongh's description. He observes that the community saw itself as distinct and separate from the other merchant communities. They were conscious about their separate identity. They preferred to have exclusive localities as places of their residence. There was a tendency among them to stay close to each other in the various ports and cities of Gujarat.[8]

Bohras: The *Daudi* Bohras comparatively had massive and spacious living area for houses. They had a knack for beautiful furniture and other embellished items, doors and windows made of coloured glass. Houses of Bohras of Surat and Rander were very beautiful. In these cities Sunni Bohras were very affluent and the beauty and size of their luxurious houses varied according to their wealth:

> "તેમના મકાનો વિશાલ, ઊંચા અને બીજા શોભાની વસ્તુઓ સજાવવાના શૌકીન હોય છે."[9]

The houses of the Bohras of Siddhpur were influenced partially in European style. They used coloured glasses on windows and doors. The beauty of the houses of the Bohras of Surat and Rander was remarkable. The reason behind it was they were very wealthy:

> "સિદ્ધપુરના વ્હોરાઓ મકાનો અર્ધયુરોપિયન ફેશનના, કઠેરવાળી અગાશીઓ અને રંગીન કાચની બારીઓવાળા હોય છે. સુરત અને રાંદેરના વ્હોરોના મકાનો જોવા લાયક સ્થળો જેવા સુંદર હોય છે. એ શહરોમાં સુન્ની વ્હોરાઓ પણ મોટા વેપારીયો અને માલદાર હોય છે. તેથી તેમના મકાનો પણ એટલા જ સુંદર છે."[10]

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[7] Thevenot, p. 5.

[8] 'Merchant Communities of Gujarat During the 17th Century as Described by *Geleynssen De Jongh*', pp. 53, 291.

[9] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 147.

[10] Ibid.p. 147.

Status of women:

Position of women has assumed extra-ordinary significance in the wake of gender based studies. The participation of women in productive activities such as craft, trade and politics and enjoyment of proprietary rights are some crucial determinants of the social space enjoyed by the female folk in given patriarchal setup.

Women of higher classes enjoyed significant position in society in comparison to the middle and lower class. They had better financial conditions and opportunities to fulfil their interest, however they could pursue these within their house due to the system of *purdah*, which was compulsory and considered sophisticate system of higher classes.

Since the merchant class represents a higher class of society and they were cautious to keep their women indoors Home was a safe and comfortable zone for their women. We do not get any information or indication of involvement of women in trade and commerce. They were restricted to their household works.

Fryer mentions that "the Indian wives dress their husbands victual, fetch water and grind their corn with hand-mill."[11] According to B.G. Gokhale – many Muslim women worked as midwives.[12] Fryer mentions that "at their labour they seldom call midwives, being pretty quick that way, though there are not a few live by that profession."[13] However interestingly enough the Bohra ladies were involved in preparation of perfumed oil (*sugandhi tel*) at home:

> "અલજત વાળમાં સુગંધી તેલ નાખવાનો રીવાજ સામાન્ય હતો; અને એવા તેલ એ સ્ત્રિયો પોતાના ઘરોમાં જ તૈયાર કરી લેતી..."[14]

The economic status of the women of the higher class in Gujarat was fairly independent. This can be observed by the fact that her property was called '*stree dhan*'.

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[11] Fryer, II, p. 118.

[12] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 32.

[13] Fryer, II, p. 118.

[14] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 54.

It was her own property, which could not touched even by her husband.[15] It was a sort of dowry; this system was observed by many travellers during Mughal period, which had become a matter of great hardship to poor.[16] This system was there in all Hindu castes except Brahmins.[17]

Apart from this some women held proprietary rights as well. Farhat Hasan observed on the basis of 'Cambay Documents' that women were involved in selling and purchasing the property. In 1657 A.D., two Hindu women- Rajbai and Imradi sold their house to the purchaser Kanjiva in Cambay and they also confirmed the legitimacy (according to *Sharia*) of this dealing.[18] In 1675 A.D., Kesawa and his sister Premabai sold their house in Cambay for Rs. 485/- to their nephews- Tulsidas and Kasidas.[19] On 13 July 1730 A.D., when a goldsmith Haridas died, his property in Ahmadabad was divided among his two sons and a daughter Rupkunwar, and both the sons got 2/5 of the property and Rupkunwar received 1/5.[20] We learn from the testimony of *Lekhapaddhati* that after the death of father, an equal share was deducted from the share of brothers to bear the expenses of marriage and dowry of their sister.[21]

Education:

An important phase for educational and literary advancement in Gujarat began with Zafar Khan's foundation of Sultanate of Gujarat.[22] Most of the Sultans were great patrons of arts and literature. Learned men from Yemen, Egypt and Persia enriched their court culture and dedicated their works to them.[23]

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[15] *Cultural History of Gujarat*, op. cit., p. 164.

[16] Careri, p. 248; Mandelslo, p. 62; Manucci, III, p. 61.

[17] *Ain-i-Akbari*, III, p. 339.

[18] *Cambay Document*, N.A.I., 2695/1, *Cf.* Hasan, Farhat, *State and Locality in Mughal India, Power Relation in Western India, c. 1572-1730*, C.U.P., Cambridge, 2004, p. 72.

[19] Ibid., N.A.I., 2695/6, *Cf. State and Locality in Mughal India, Power Relation in Western India,* op. cit., p. 72.

[20] Ibid., N.A.I., 2695/27, *Cf. State and Locality in Mughal India, Power Relation in Western India,* p. 73.

[21] Prasad, Pushpa, *Lekhapaddhati*, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2007, pp. 32-33.

[22] Quraishi, M.A., 'A Glimpse of Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat', Eds. S.C. Misra, *J.M.S.U.B.* Vol. XVII, Baroda, 1968, p. 45.

[23] 'A Glimpse of Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat', op. Cit., p. 45.

In Mughal India, education was a branch of religion and the educational expenditure of the state was significantly defrayed of the alms fund and through the hands of *sadr-us sudur*.[24] In A.D. 1572-73, Gujarat became a province of Mughal Empire. Despite the fact that emperor Akbar, Jahangir and Aurangzeb did not stay in Gujarat permanently but they took keen interest in the education of the province. Akbar met and honoured *Maulana* Mohammad bin Tahir Pattani for educational pursuit.[25] When Jahangir came to Ahmadabad, he met a number of religious divines and *sufis*, presented books to them and honoured them in other manner. Such honoures reached the students of *Madarsah* of Shah Wajihuddin.[26]

A *farman* belonging to early phase of the reign of Aurangzeb, instructs the *diwan* of Gujarat that a teacher should be appointed every year for imparting proper education at the cost of the state. Stipends were paid to the students according to the recommendation of the *sadr* of the *subah* and the attestation (*tasdiq*) under seal of the teacher. The amount was disbursed out of the public Treasury.[27] The grant was small and only three *maulavis* were appointed – one at Ahmadabad, Pattan and Surat.[28]

Muslim education and learning flourished successfully in Gujarat, and influenced the non-Muslims as well. The Hindus had to learn Persian because it was the official language and they got a very good command over it, even they wrote books and composed poetry in this language.[29]

The important thing was educational activities were confined only to some centres, like Pattan, Ahmadabad, Champaner, Cambay, Broach and Surat etc. Among these cities Pattan, Ahmadabad and Champaner were the capital cities at different times. All these towns were important trade centres and flourishing sea-ports.[30] Brokers played an interesting role in trading activities since they acted as communicating link between foreign and local traders. Their medium of communication was either Persian or

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[24] Sarkar, Sir Jadunath, *Mughal Administration*, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 143-144.

[25] 'A Glimpse of Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat', p. 46.

[26] Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Eds. Henry Beveridge, 2 Vols., Low Price Publication, Delhi, 2000 (reprint), p. 414.

[27] *Mughal Administration*, op. cit., p. 144.

[28] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 258; *Mughal Administration*, p. 144.

[29] 'A Glimpse of Muslim Education and Learning in Gujarat', p. 47.

[30] Ibid., p. 50.

Gujarati language. They also worked as translators for outsiders. This tradition gave an impetus to the development of literary activities.

Among the Bohras, Sheikh Hamid, a well-known merchant of medieval period was a great scholar too. He treasured around twenty thousand books in his library. Aurangzeb issued a *farman* for Surat mint to give four thousand coins of gold and silver to Sheikh Hamid for the maintenance and love for books:[31]

> "શેખ હમીદ કુશળ વ્યાપારી હોવા સાથે પ્રખર અભ્યાસી પણ હતા. તેમના પુસ્તકાલયમાં વીસહજાર પુસ્તકોનો સંગ્રહ હતો. તેમની આ અભ્યાસપ્રિય તાથી પ્રભાવિત થયેલા ઔરંગઝેબ જેવા કરકસરી શહેનશાહે ઈ.સ. ૧૬૬૮ માં સુરતની ટાંકશાળને એવું ફરમાન મોકલ્યું હતું કે શેખ હમીદને રૂ. ચાર હજાર સુધીના ચાંદીના ય સોનાના સિક્કા દરરોજ, માંગે ત્યારી પાડી આપવા."[32]

Sheikh Mohammad Fazil (son of Sheikh Hamid) was also a wealthy man and a great scholar too. He sent some of his own clerical staff to Egypt, Arab and other countries to procure rare manuscripts and books. He spent an enormous amount of Rs. 30,00,000/- for this purpose and collected 40,000 rare manuscripts. He was himself a great poet and composed poetry with the pseudonym of '*Fazil*'. He professionally composed his poems in the languages of Arabic, Persian, Hindi and off-course Gujarati. Ha had a collection of rare books on philosophy, religion and politics:

> "શેખ હમીદના પુત્ર શેખ મોહમ્મદ ફઝીલ પણ ગર્ભ શ્રીમંત અને જ્ઞાનપ્રિય શખ્સ હતા. તેમને પોતાના કતીબોને અરબસ્તાન-ઈજિપ્ત વગેરે દેશોમાં મોકલી અમૂલ્ય ગ્રંથોની નકલ કરાવેલી. આ રીતે તેમને રૂ. ૩૦ લાખનો ખર્ચ કરીને ચાળીસ હજાર હસ્તલિખિત ગ્રંથોનો અસામાન્ય સંગ્રહ કરેલો. તેઓ પોતે કવિ હતા. ફઝીલ તેમનું તખલ્લુસ. અરબી, ફારસી,

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[31] *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 61; Also see, *Sunni Vahora*, p. 26.

[32] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 26; Also see *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 61.

હિન્દી અને ગુજરાતી એમ ચાર ભાષામાં કાવ્યો રચતા. તેમને તત્વજ્ઞાન, ધર્મ અને રાજકારણ વિષે પણ પુસ્તકો લખ્યા હતા."[33]

However we do not have much information pertaining to the education of *Daudi* Bohras, evidence suggests that their language was Gujarati and they used to speak this language in a quite different manner. Their ladies however never learnt Arabic language but they used to pronounce Arabic words correctly.[34]

Among the Europeans, the Portuguese exercised tremendous social, economic and cultural influence, especially in the western coasts. The Portuguese greatly enriched the Indian vocabulary and medical science. The first treatise on the medicinal plants of India was written by a Portuguese scholar – Garcia da Orta.[35]

The introduction of printing and the establishment of seminaries for the training of the Indian priests were other valuable contributions of the Portuguese. The Portuguese influence is also visible on the ecclesiastical architecture of India, especially in Deccan.[36]

Ardhakathanak gives us a glimpse of the education of a modest merchant one finds him oblivious with the Muslim institutions of learning such as madrasa, *maktabs* and mosques, despite the fact that he was native of Jaunpur which was then a major centre of Arabic and Persian education. This strange attitude has been explained by Mukund Lath, the biographer of the above merchant as an indication of the latitude Mughals allowed for the co-existence of a parallel culture unlike the British authority who imposed their Anglicist stance. Akbar in pursuance of his catholic spirit gave equal credence to the establishment of Persian *madarsa* and Sanskrit *pathshala*.

His primary education was conducted in medieval Indian *pathshala* managed by a single pedagogue supported by and catered to business families.

[33] *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 62; Also see *Sunni Vahora*, p. 26-27.

[34] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 146.

[35] *Social Cultural and Economic History of India (Modern Times)*, p. 1.

[36] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

Education of erotics, astronomy, rhetoric and other lexical works was gained by one Devdutt a learned teacher maintained by the Jain community. The Jain monks also served as effective disseminators of learning. The curriculum included Jain cannon and related doctrinal text. Sanskrit grammar and logic/*nyay* were the other subjects taught by certain *pandits*.[37]

Language:

During 16th-17th century trade flourished on the west coast in Gujarat on both the levels local as well as international. Gujaratis sent their ships in far flung countries, and foreigners came in this region for trade pursuit. To have trade relations with a country, region or the people of different cultures one has to have some basic knowledge of the local language. Directly or indirectly, language played vital role in all the dealings.

Every language has different phases in its journey of development, and a language can absorb many words from other languages. Gujarati has also adopted a rich vocabulary from other languages. Because this region had been the nerve centre of Indian trade, so it had contacts with different people, culture and languages.

To know about the development and contribution of Gujarati language, it is necessary to know about the linguistic boundaries of Gujarati. It extends almost to the Palanpur (between Sirohi and Marwar) in the north, and also touches the region of Sind (district of Thar and Parkar). In the west it is bounded by Rann of Kutch, but covered the area of Kathiawar.[38] In south it extends up to Surat, where it has some influence of Marathi of Daman. In this area, on both the sides, the region was bilingual.[39] In the east it includes the area of Dharampur and the range of Aravali hills. If we go northwards from this area to Ajmer, which divides Marwar from Mewar, and occupied by the Bhil tribes of Rajputana whose dialects are Jaipuri and Malwi. These dialects were closely connected with Gujarati and Bhil dialects, considered as linkage between them.[40]

[37] *Ardhakathanak*, pp. 41-42.

[38] Grierson, G. A., *Linguistic Survey of India*, 11 Vols., IX (part-2), Low Price Publications, Delhi, 1990, p. 324.

[39] *Linguistic Survey of India*, IX (part-2), op. cit., p. 324.

[40] Ibid.

Marco Polo acquainted Europe of Gujarat as early as 1254-1324 A.D., however Gujarati as a language found mentioned in 1731 by La Croz in as Gujaratica Lingua. The celebrated Danish missionary Scultze also uses the language in a compilation entitled Orientalisch and Occidentalisch Spachmeister.[41]

The corpus of Gujarati literature can be classified into poetic masterpieces of Narsingh Mehta, Vallabh Kalidas, Pritam and the Bardic literature utilized by Forbes in his Rasmala.

The origin of the language can be traced from the Nagar form of Saurseni Apbhransa utilized by grammarian Hemchandra Suri.[42] The Nagar Brahamans a prominent learned Hindu community of Gujarat influence the Nagri Gujarati.The Parsis and the Muslims adopted variations of dialect and pronunciations.

The heterogeneity of merchants of Gujarat enriched the Gujarati language ,such merchant communities included Parsis, Khojas, Jains, Hindus and the foreign merchants of European origin. The common parlance was Gujarati interestingly enough the Gujarati language was also recognised parlance in the Red Sea. The Arabs controlled the trade between Calicut and the Red Sea. On the rest of the route Gujarati Muslims and Gujarati Banias had considerable control.[43]

Religion:

The merchants were particular about adherence to their respective faith. The Banias took along Brahmans abroad to conduct religious demands. The Jain Banias were very charitable and also invested much on temple construction as we shall discuss elsewhere Similarly Parsis and Bohras were meticulous adherents of their faith and followed their spiritual leaders to carry out rituals and mores.

However we find considerable details of a modest Shrimali Jain Bania religious views in Ardhkathanak The religious ideas of a Jain merchant like Banarasidas cannot fit in a straight jacket as we find considerable vacillations in his religious ideas. For a time slot of 12 years 1623 to 1637, he was in an iconoclastic mood which made him

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[41] *Linguistic Survey of India*, IX (part-2), p. 324.

[42] Ibid.

[43] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 14.

associate with the *adhyatma* insist which questioned the conventional formal practices of the orthodox *Digambar* faith, scoffing ascetic and mystic state.

This spiritual upheaval among the Jain associate itself with Banarasidas. He headed as *Adi Guru*. The *adhyatma* movement culminated in *Therapanthi* sect of Digambar. Banarasidas calls it adhyatmi. He however does not take credit being the founder.

At a later stage one finds Banarasidas to have found solace of intellectual fulfilment in the notion of *gunasthanas* drawn from 11th century classic doctrine of *gomatasara* which resolved dichotomy of formlessness of the spirit and strict adherence of conducts and rituals. These were now understood by him as spiritual base for discipline towards mystic faith, a grooming of man's morals relevant at a later stage.

Entertainment:

The merchant communities in Gujarat had their own way or source of entertainment. As Ovington informs us that there was a noble spacious place *Carvan Sarai* or Inn in the middle of the city of Surat, for the convenience of merchants that were strangers, and resort hither for traffic, where they decently repose at night. There were no public houses for their entertainment, so they made their arrangements by their own or by the help of their attendants or peons.[44]

Manucci refers to the dancing women in general, and says that they exhibited their performances in the principal open places in the city. From six in the evening till nine at night, the place was illumined by many torches and they earned a good deal of money.[45]

Dresses and Ornaments:

Different communities in Gujarat had different customs, cultures and dresses, so one can easily identify a person's religion, caste or community by their distinct dresses, ornaments and lifestyle.

Community of Bohras was spread over the whole of Gujarat and Saurashtra. They adopted different cultures. People of the same community, of a place had different

[44] Ovington, p. 184.

[45] Manucci, I, pp. 195-196.

cultures from the people of other places. Bohras of northern Gujarat were culturally different from the Bohras of southern Gujarat.[46]

Those who converted from Hinduism continued to follow their lifestyle and customs. That is why these new converted (*nav musalman*) Bohras had many similarities with Hindus in their beliefs and customs:

> "સુન્ની વહોરાઓમાં અરબ નસલના કુટુંબો સિવાય ધરમ પરિવર્તન કરીને આવેલા હિંદુ કુટુંબોનું પ્રમાણ પણ ઘણું મોટું રહ્યું છે. આ નવમુસ્લીમો હિંદુ રીવાજો ને રાહેણીકરણીના પોતાની સાથે લઈને આવ્યા હતા. એમના સહવાસથી અરબ કુટુંબો પણ એ રીવાજો ને રહેણીકરણીના રંગે રંગાયા બીના રહ્યા હોય એમ માનવને કારણ ના થી. કદાચ આ જ કારનો હતા કે સુન્ની વહોરા કૌમના હિંદુ રીવાજો ને રહેણીકરણીનો ઘણો વ્યાપ થવા પામ્યો હતો."[47]

There was a special kind of dress of Bohras at that time, *Kheroot* (farmers) sept of Sunni Bohras of northern Gujarat used to wear loose (*dheeli*) and big (*moti*) turban (*paaghri*)[48],

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[46] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 48.

[47] Ibid., p. 49.

[48] *Paaghri* was a head gear or a compulsory item in the wardrobe of rich and the poor. The length and the breadth of a standard turban are indicated as twelve to eighteen meter in length and twenty four to thirty cm. in breadth. The variety of cloth material ranged from cotton to silk and inter-woven tinsels. Brijbhushan, Jamila, *The Costumes and Textiles in India*, p. 40. *Cf.* Verma, Som Prakash, *Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 50.



Dhheeli Moti Paaghri

quilted vest (*bandi*) and trouser (*ijar*- loose at upper side and tight at bottom- *like Kathiawri people*),



and tied a cloth on their waist. Sunni Bohras of central Gujarat used to wear turban a bit small (*nani*) and less loose turban (*ochhi dheeli paaghri*)



Ochhi Dheeli Paaghri

in comparison to the Bohras of northern Gujarat. They wore coat and loose trouser (*ijar*)[49]. Men used to wear a silver-ring (*veenti*)[50] in their finger and a chain (*achhoda*)[51] in the neck:

> "એ સમયના વોહરાઓનો પહેરવેશ પણ વિશિષ્ટ પ્રકારના હતો.......... ખેડૂત સુન્ની વહોરા મોટી ઢીલી પાઘડી બાંધતા. બંડી અને કાઠી લોકો જેવી ઉપરથી ઢીલી ને નીચે ચુસ્ત એવી ઈજાર પહેરતા. કમરે પિછોડી ય કોઈ બીજું કપડું બાંધતા. મધ્ય ગુજરાતના સુન્ની વહોરા ઉત્તર ગુજરાતના કરતા જરા નાની અને ઓછી ઢીલી પાઘડી બાંધતા. દક્ષિણ ગુજરાતમાં માથે ટોપી પહેરતા ય પાઘડી બાંધતા; અને કોટ તથા ઢીલી ઈજાર પહેરતા. પુરુષો હાથમાં ચાંદીની પહોથી ને વીંટી પહેરતા, ગાળામાં અછોડો નાખતા."[52]

[49] Actual name is *izar*, but in Gujarat it was corruptly called *ijar*. It was meant to cover the lower part of the body. It has been identified as a prototype of *shalwar*. It had base fitting up to the knees with comparatively leg fitted folds. We can compare it with the modern *Churidar* pyjama. *Ain*, I, p. 96; Also see *Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*, op. cit., p. 47.

[50] It was a ring which made of either gold or silver. Men and women both used to wear this ornament.

[51] A chain of gold or silver, men-women love to wear it. It was a sort of status symbol as well.

[52] *Sunni Vahora*, p.53.

Daudi Bohra had varied kinds of their turbans like: *Ujjaini ghat, Ahamdabadi Ghat and Kathiwari Ghat etc:*

"દાઉદી પાઘડી ચાર પ્રકારની હોય છે : ઉજ્જૈની ઘટ, અહમાંદાબડી ઘટ, કથીઅવાડી ઘટ."[53]

Emperor Jahangir issued a *farman*, in which he granted (*inam*) 200 *bigha* (*bey sau veegha*) land to a Patel Bohra family (*kutumb*) of Tadkeshwar (in Surat district). This *farman* also gives some information (*ullekh*) about their dress. They used to wear round (*gol*) and long (*laambi*) cap which was called *kulah-i-Bawahir*[54] (cap of Bohras):



Kulah-i-Bawahir

[53] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 145.

[54] *Kulah* was a cap mentioned in *Ain*, the top was high and the curves carried greatly. The base was bordered in different manner, besides the turban common people used *kulah*. *Ain*, I, p. 96. Also see *Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*, p. 47.

"શહેનશાહ જહાંગીર તડકેશ્વર (જીલ્લો સુરત) ના એક સુન્ની વહોરા પટેલ કુટુંબને ઇનામરૂપે આપેલી બેસો વિઘા જમીન અંગેના શાહી ફરમાનના વહોરાઓ વિશે ઉલ્લેખ છે કે, તેઓ ગોળ, લાંબી ટોપી પહેરે છે. જે 'કુલાહે બવાહિર' તરીકે ઓળખાય છે."[55]

The dress of *Charotari*[56] Bohras was – *dhoti* and they used to tie a cloth on their forehead (which was called - *faaniyu* or *fento*):

"ચરોતરના સુન્ની વહોરા પહેરણ અને ધોતિયું પહેરતા અને માથે ફાનીયું (ફેંટો) બંધાતા."[57]

Apart from all this, some Bohras wore *angarkha*[58] and actual (*asal*[59]) Bohras wore round turban (*gol paaghri*) and long coat (*achkan*)[60] embroidered with *zari* (golden thread), it was like Memons' *achkan*, generally they used white clothes:

[55] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 53.

[56] Another name of Kheda district was *Charotar* and Bohras of this place were called *Charotari* Bohras. Their main language was Gujarati followed by Urdu.

[57] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 53.

[58] It was similar to Abul Fazl's *jama* and was a common outfit during Mughal period. It was a coat of loose fitting and long enough. The rich people decorated it with embroidery and gold thread. The *katzeb* or a cloth belt was tied around the waist with a fine knot. *Ain*, I, p. 94; Also see *Art and Material Culture in the Paint*ings *of Akbar's Court*, p. 47.

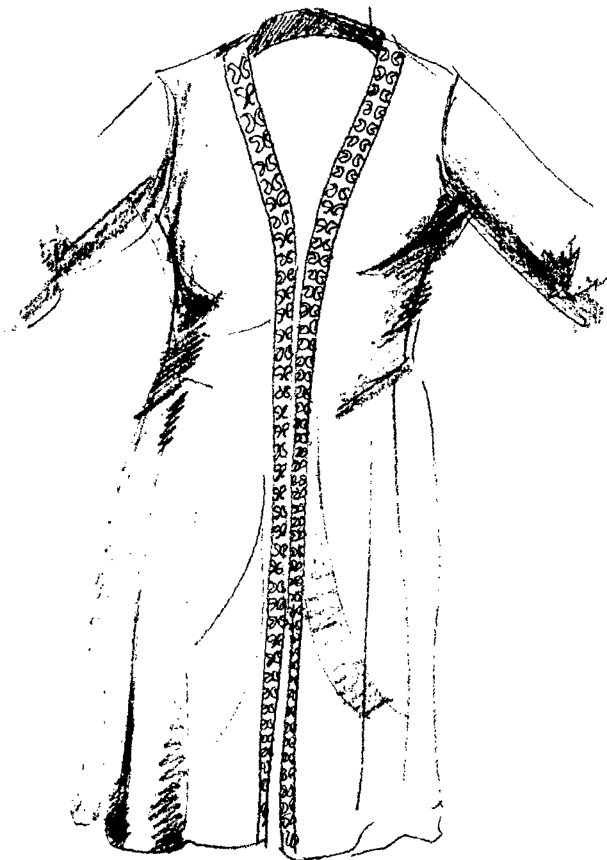
[59] Those, who were not converted from Hinduism or any other religion to Islam.

[60] It was like Abul Fazl's *farji*, a long over coat, which had no bindings and decorated on borders, open in front. Some buttons on it.

Ain, I, p. 95; Also see *Art and Material Culture in the Paint*ings *of Akbar's Court*, pp. 50-51.



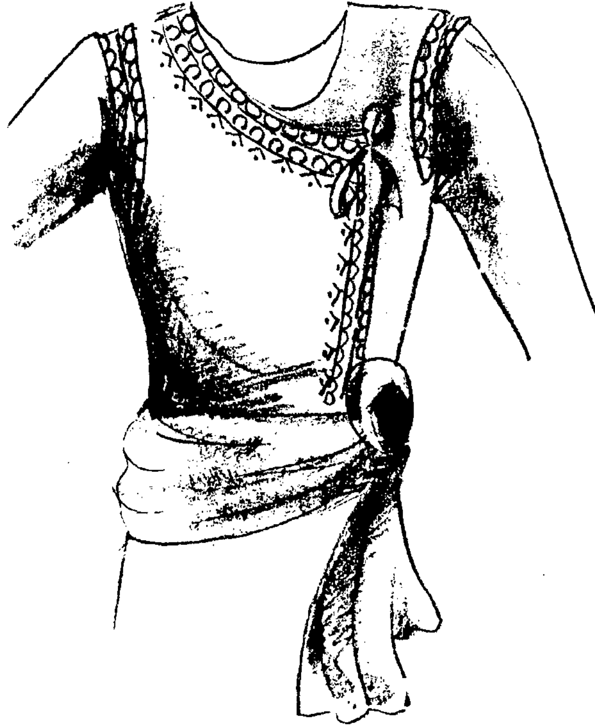
Gol Paaghri



Achkan

"એ સિવાય સુન્ની વહોરા પહેરણ અને અન્ગરખયે પહેરતા. અસલ વહોર્શાઈ ગોળ પાઘડી બંધાતા અને જરી કલબના ભરત કામવાળા મેમણશાયી અચકન પહેરતા. તેમના કપડાનો રંગ સામાન્ય રીતે સફેદ રહેતો."[61]

Daudi Bohras wore a cap of velvet or white cotton, white shirt, pyjama, or *shalwar*[62] (tight at bottom and a little bit loose at the top). But outside the house they used to wear small white turban, pyjama, *angarkha* and shoes of *ujjaini* style:



Angarkha

[61] *Sunni Vahora,* p. 53.

[62] It was a bit different from *izar*, it was loose fitting up to the knees and crinkled below them, fastened on the waist by string. Akbar called it *yar-pirdhan*. *Ain*, I, p. 96.

"ઘરમાં માથે મખમલ કે સફેદ સુતારાઈ ટોપીયો, શરીરે સફેદ સદરિયા, ઘુટણથી નીચે આવે તેવા લાંઘા પહેરણ અને કમર નીચે સફેદ અથવા લીટી ઓવાજી, ઉપરથી ઢીલી અને નીચેથી તંગ સુરવાણો પહેરે છે. બહાર જવામાં, માથે નાની સફેદ પાઘડીયો, કઘજા અને ઢઘના લાંઘા અંગરખા, ઘરમાં પહેરે છે તેવી સુરવાણો અને લાંઘા ઉજ્જૈની ઘાટના જોડા પહેરે છે."[63]

The appearance and traditions of Alia Bohras were same as Daudi Bohras; it was difficult to identify them at first sight.[64] It was all about the Bohra men, and we cannot ignore the dresses and ornaments of Bohra ladies.

For the Bohra ladies, there was a traditional dress – short shirt (*kurti*)[65] and loose pyjama (*lengho*) or short shirt and simple pyjama:

"સુન્ની વહોરા સ્ત્રીઓમાં કુર્તી અને પજામો પહેર્વાનો રીવાજ હતો."[66]

As Carol E. Henderson mentions in her '*culture and customs of India*', women in the western India embroider their skirts with symbols of auspiciousness, such as clay water pot topped with leaf and flower, seed, vine, and flower motifs. The edge of the skirt have a sharp-pointed zigzag borders.[67] Bohra ladies used to adorn an ornament on their forehead which was called *misar* or *shirbandh*. They had a cloth on their head called *orhani*. They also wore *sari* and long skirts (*chaniya*):

"માથે મિસર (શિરબંધ) બાંધવામાં આવતું ત્તેના ઉપર ઓઢણી નંખાતી. સાડી અને ચણિયો પહેરવાનો રીવાજ પણ હતો."[68]

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[63] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 144.

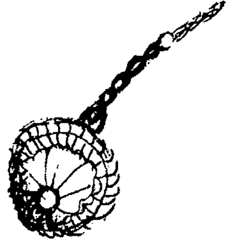
[64] Ibid., p. 166

[65] *Kurti* was a short shirt for ladies.

[66] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 53.

[67] Henderson, E. Carol, *Culture and Customs of India*, London, 2004, p. 112.

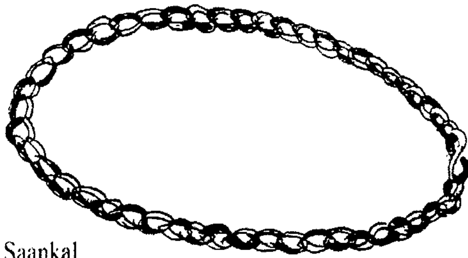
[68] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 53.



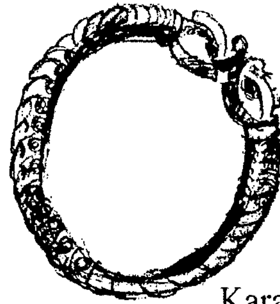
Misar/Shirbandh

Sunni Bohra women had essentially a collection of jewellery (*gharena*). They had chain (*saankal*), bangles (*kara*), ear-rings (*vali*), finger-rings (*veenti*), an ornament for neck called *hansdi*, bangles (*bangadi*), coin studded necklace (*daamri*), hair-clips (*khunsala*), chain for feet (*paaayal*) and *jodava* etc. All these ornaments were either made of gold or silver. Much money and metal was covered by *khunsala* (rings) in both ears of women:

> "સુન્ની વહોરા સ્ત્રીઓના ઘરેણામાં સંકલ, કળા, વાળી, વીંટી, હાંસડી, બંગડી, દામણી, કાંટો,ખુલસા, પાયલ, જોડવા વગેરેનો સમાવેશ થયો હતો. એ સોનાના યા ચાંદીના ઘડાવમાં આવતા. ત્યારે મોટે ભાગે સ્ત્રીઓના બન્ને કાન સોનાના ખુંસલાથી ભરેલા રહેતા."[69]



Saankal



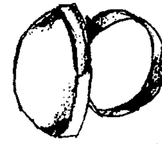
Kara

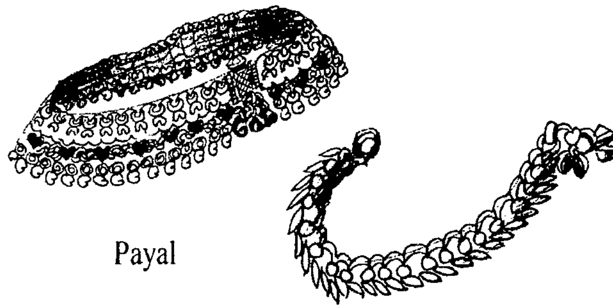


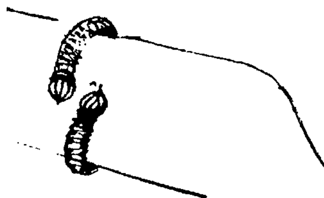
Vaali

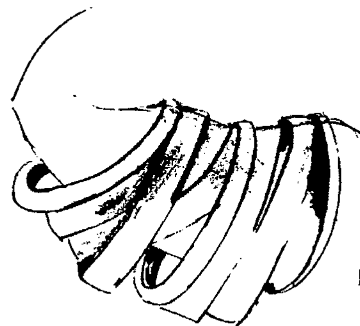
[69] *Sunni Vahora,* p. 54.

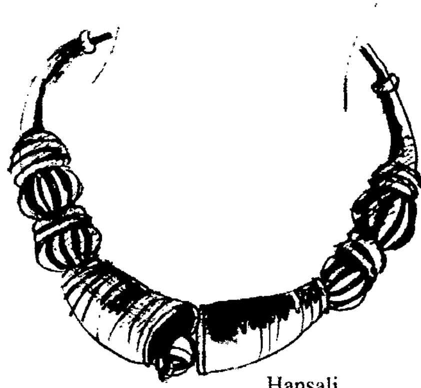

Daamri

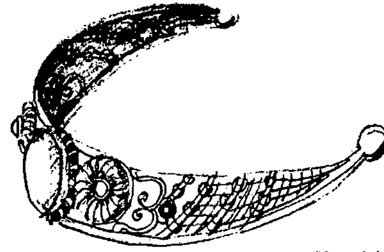

Veenti


Payal


Baloya


Bangadi


Hansali


Kanthi

Besides this Charotari Bohra ladies wore special bangles called *baloya* over the elbow/arms and bangles (*bangadi*) of ivory. They had silver-chain and bangle-like big ring called *kalla* in their feets. Apart from this, they used to wear different kind of nose-pin/ring which was called *bulab* or *vesar* and silver-ring (*hansali*) in their neck, small neck choker (*kanthi*) and chain (*achhoda* or *ranmala*):

> "ચરોતરી વહોરા સ્ત્રીઓ હાથમાં હાથીદાંતના બલોયા તથા બંગડી અને પગમાં ચાંદીના કલ્લા ય ઝાંઝર ને વેઠ પહેરતી. એ સિવાય નાકમાં બુલાબ ય વેસર અને ગાળામાં ચાંદીની હંસલી, સોનાની કાનથી, અછોડો યા રણમાળા પરિધાન કરતી."[70]

The Bohra ladies used henna (*mendi*) and *kajal* for adorning their hands, feet (*pag*) and eyes. On special occasion they used perfumes (*attar*) and other scented items:

> "આ વહોરા સ્ત્રીઓ હાથ, પગ અને શ્રંગાર માટે મેંદી અને કાજળનો પ્રમાણસર ઉપયોગ કરતી. અત્તર યા અન્ય સુગંધી પદાર્થોનો ઉપયોગ ખાસ ખાસ અવસરે કરતી."[71]

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[70] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 54.

[71] Ibid.

Daudi Bohra ladies used to wear brown or yellow coloured cotton or silk *orhani*:

"સ્ત્રીઓ રાત ઘેર ભૂરા રંગની અથવા પીળી સુતરાયી અગર રેશમી ઓઢણીયો ઓઢે છે."[72]

About the Bania women Ovington observes that '*a big amount of money of Banias was expended over their women, who ambitiously affect the gayety in their dress and their clothing. Jewels and ornament could make them happy anytime. Their toes were adorned with rings, and their legs with shackles of gold or silver or some other metals, which were sometimes above two inches in diameter, wreathed and hollow. Bania women would not walk outside their home without these ornaments upon them.*'[73] Some ladies tied-up their hair and put it under a hollow large piece of silver, raised somewhat like a bell, gilt and neatly embellish on the outside, fastened to the crown of their heads.[74] Some women wore ear-rings all round their ears lobe which for ornaments' sake which would dangle sometimes almost down to their shoulders, and have bracelets about their neck and arms, and bangles in their wrists, and rings on every finger. Some adorn themselves with breast jewels (may be long jewels/ornaments of neck/necklace), formed in fashion of a heart, composed of variety of diamonds, rubies, sapphire and other stones of esteem. On their foreheads they wore a gold-badkin, broad at the end, beset with glittering diamonds or some other precious stones.'[75]

Among the Meshri Banias, they used to wear a basil thread, which was called *kanthi*, round the neck. They mark their brows with two upright lines of red powder *kanku*,[76] rub their eyelids and foreheads with the yellow dust which was found near Gokul and Mathura, and imprint a seal dipped in sandal-dust between the sectarian lines and the temples over their neck and arms.[77]

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[72] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 145.

[73] Ovington, p. 188.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] *Kanku* is term used for *Kumkum* or *sindoor* or vermilion.

[77] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat*, I, p. 89.

About the Ghanchis it is observed that they had fair complexion and their women were of strong built, and their dresses closely resembled that of Banias.[78]

The merchants and shopkeepers can be differentiated from the foreign traders by their massive turbans, long beards, *dhotis*, *ijars* and *faniyus* etc. The dress of modest traders was same as the dress of common people.

Food Habits:

Food habits always vary from place to place, and Gujarat region always had its unique variety of cuisines. Religious traditions such as Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism highlighted vegetarianism in their value systems.[79] Jain temple complexes included a dining hall that serves vegetarian food.[80] If we see community wise, Ovington says that *"the Banias seldom drink of the consmon water of the wells or rivers, only what falls from heaven in the time of the mussouns (monsoon), which was preserved in large tanks and cisterns made on purpose to receive it, and keep it ready for their use the following year."*[81] When any European was invited by a Bania on a dinner/lunch, the menu was little else but variety of sweet meats lay upon the green leaves of trees. Sometimes a dish or two of rich spiced *palau* (pulao) came into make up a complete banquet. *Sherbet* (wine), water and lemon; the best drink they indulge themselves, or allow others commonly to partake of.[82] Makarand Mehta says that 'Virji Vohra was the first person who made coffee so popular in the region of Gujarat and often places of India.'[83]

Banias and Moors change their food according to seasons to prevent the inconvenience of digestion and stomach, and take their meal about 8 or 9 in the morning and at 4 or 5 in the afternoon.[84]

Among the Ghanchis, except Modh and Sidhpurias, they eat the flesh of goats, sheep, fowls and fish, and drink liquor. Socially they ranked almost equal to the lower

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[78] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 1.

[79] *Culture and Customs of India*, p. 102.

[80] Ibid., p. 103.

[81] Ovington, p. 183.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Mehta, Makarand, *Gujaratna Ghadvaiya*, Arunodaya Prakashan, Ahmadabad, 2007, p. 183.

[84] *Gujaratna Ghadvaiya*, op. Cit., p. 184.

class (*sudras*), though *Gola-Ghanchi* was a common synonym in Surat for low caste group in contradiction to the Brahmins and Bania classes.[85]

Among the Bohras there was a sect of Shia Bohras which was called 'Nagoshi' or 'Nagoshia'. They did not eat meat and that is why they got this name 'Nagoshi', they believed that having meat is a sin:

> "તેમના કોમી સિદ્ધાંતોમાં સૌથી વિશિષ્ટ સિદ્ધાંત માંસાહાર નહિ કરવાનો છે. તેમ કરવું તેઓ 'પાપ' માને છે. તે ઉપરથી તેઓ "નાગોશીઆ" કહેવાય છે."[86]

But Karim Master says that Daudi Bohras were not different from other Muslims in their food habit. There was an unusual thing in Daudis that did not consume any kind of food which was prepared by non-Muslims. In their non-vegetarian food they prefer cow's meat; the reason behind this either it was comparatively cheap or it was more nutritious. They used to eat fishes after the process of *halal* (lawfully prepared by a Muslim) like other animals; however it was not compulsory in other Muslim communities (because fish is an aquatic creature and it becomes dead immediately after taking out from water, and process of *halal* is valid only on alive animals:

> "ખાવાપીવામાં દાઉદી વહોરાઓ બીજા મુસલમાનોથી ખાસ જુદા પડતી નથી, પરંતુ તેમનો એક ખાસ નિયમ હોય છે કે તેઓ બિન-મુસલમાનનાં હાથનું ખાતાપીતા નથી. ખાવામાં કઈ પણ નકામું જાય નહિ તેની તેઓ કાળજી રાખે છે. માંસાહારમાં તેઓ ગાયનું ગોસ્ત વધારે ખાય છે, તે વધારે પૌષ્ટિક હોવાને કારણે અથવા તે સસ્તું હોવાને કારણે હોય. માછી પણ બીજા જાનવર માફક, કોઈ પણ મુસલમાનને હાથે 'હલાલ' કરેલી હોવે જોઈએ."[87]

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[85] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 2.

[86] *Mahagujaratno Musalmano* (part – 1 & 2), p. 166.

[87] Ibid.

One can thus conclude that the various merchant communities took considerable interest in their lifestyle and lavishly invested in items of luxury. They also had apparent aesthetics to appreciate and adopt the variant luxuries.

Chapter -4

Merchant Participation in Social Mores and Religious Customs

Merchants followed their traditions, rituals and ceremonies according to their respective religion. They enjoyed and involved in their cultural activities, such as: festivities of marriage, child birth, and other occasional celebrations.

The basic unit of a civilized society is family, and marriage is one of the oldest institutions of society. It is not only a bond of people but a bond of two families. A set of adjustments, peculiar to human beings, which arises from the necessity for the preservation of the race, developed into an institution which is called 'Marriage and family'.

This chapter entails the investigation of custom, rituals and mores related to society and religion of the various merchant communities. One can also discern the existing social evils like *sati*, polygamy and enforced widowhood.

Marriage Customs:

Among the Banias, marriage was regarded as sacred. The Hindu Gods were married and had a consort.[1] Vaishnavas / Meshris were a hard-working class, attached to trade and merchandise, with an extraordinary devotion towards religious matters.[2] They did not worship a bachelor or virgin. Shiva is considered '*Ardhanariswra*', and his image signifies the cooperative, interdependent, separately incomplete but jointly complete masculine and feminine functions of the Supreme Being.[3]

Polygamy:

Second marriage was allowed in some cases, as Ovington explains, in case of Banias of Surat: "*second marriages, which were indulged to the men, were solemnly prohibited to the women, because this engages their fidelity so much, the more to the first lover, in that they were debarred all hopes and prospects of all others. But with this additional severity upon the young maids, whose husbands die before they cohabit, that they were obliged to a disconsolate virginity all the days of their lives; and must never contacted with another man, though they were unfortunately widows at six or seven year of age.*"[4] About

[1] *Cultural History of Gujarat*, p. 143.

[2] Mandelslo, p.10.

[3] *Cultural History of Gujarat*, p. 143.

[4] Ovington, p. 191.

polygamy, Ovington says that besides the second marriages, polygamy was allowed to wanton husbands.[5]

Abul Fazl reflects negatively "*nor does his majesty approve of everyone marrying more than one wife, for this ruins a man's health and disturb the peace of home.*"[6] He issued orders that a man of ordinary means should not have more than one wife unless the first proved to be barren.[7]

In Parsi community, they were not allowed to marry out of caste, but they could marry their cousins, even with first cousin. This kind of alliance was always preferred.[8] They were the monogamist, polygamy obtains amongst the highest class or the lowest the highest class or the lowest.[9] According to E. Kulke in terms of strict rules of endogamy and commensality, it continued to constitute a single multifunctional caste as before in relation to the society at large. But internally, it also continued to maintain freedom of choice of occupation for all. Increased division of labour did not take the form of creating hereditary castes and sub-castes though tendencies towards such formations were not altogether absent. The hereditary clerical (*Mobed*) clan did tend to crystallize into a caste by setting up marriage barriers between themselves and the laity (*Behdin*) during the 18th century, but failed to emerge as such. The corpse-bearer (*Nasalar*), working at the tower of silence, continued to be treated almost as untouchables in the matter of religious and social intercourse.[10]

Among the Ghanchis, polygamy was permissible after making the provisions for the maintenance of the first wife. Polyandry was unknown. But widows were allowed to remarry. A widow might marry a younger brother of her deceased husband, but never the elder. Divorce, though rare, but it was allowed with the sanction of the caste *panch*.

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[5] Ovington, p. 191.

[6] *Ain*, I, p. 46.

[7] Badaoni, Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Tr. Wolsley Haig, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1925 (Reprint-1973, New Delhi), II, op. cit., p. 367.

[8] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, op. cit., p. 226.

[9] Ibid., p. 227.

[10] Kulke, E., *Parsees in India, Cf.* 'More About the Parsi Sheths: Their Roots Entrepreneurship, and Comprador Role, 1650-1918', pp. 113-114.

Divorced wives were allowed to marry again by widow remarriage form.[11] The widow remarriage ceremony was very simple.

Child Marriage:

The custom of child marriage in Gujarat was also prevalent in society and it grew about 10th century A.D.[12] Mandelslo explains that this custom came into practice between 800-1000 A.D., child marriage came into vogue owing to people's desire to prevent women becoming Buddhist nuns, and hence the marriage of girls at an early age must have become popular as a precaution. Buddhism was suppressed towards the end of the eighth or ninth century A.D., and the custom of child marriage must have grown further into popular favours.[13] This ancient custom combined with the prohibition of the widow-remarriage led, in due time, to the miserable class of women among high class Hindus called 'child-widows'.

Girls were married when they were seven, nine or eleven years old.[14] The Banias sometimes marries his mistress at six or seven years of age.[15] Among the '*Kapol*'[16] sept of Banias, some girls remain unmarried till they are fourteen or sixteen.[17]

Manucci with reference to the Hindus observes that "*often their daughters are married even before they have learnt to talk.*"[18] Withington and Mandelslo also refer to the practice of early marriages prevalent in those days.[19]

Abul Fazl also refers to the practice of early marriages "*In the extensive country of India men are active to form this union at a tender age, and this introduces the leaven of*

[11] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 1.

[12] Mandelslo, p. 148.

[13] Ibid., p.149.

[14] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat,* II, p. 90.

[15] Ovington, p. 189.

[16] The *Kapol* Banias, an important subdivision of Meshri Bania community came from Surat and they were the followers of *Shreenathji*. It was a *Puhtimargi* sect of Vaishnavism.

[17] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat,* II, p. 90.

[18] Manucci, II, p. 54.

[19] Mandelslo, pp. 51, 58; Withington, p. 221.

veil."[20] However Badaoni observes that boys were not to marry before the age of 16, nor girls before 14.[21]

The marriage occasion was auspicious between the eleventh of the '*kartak sud*' (October- November) and the eleventh of the '*asad sud*' (June-July).[22]

The custom was that a few days before the marriage, father of the girl invited friends, relatives and an astrologer who decides an auspicious day for the ceremony and presented by husked rice and a rupee. The marriage date was recorded on a roll of paper, which was sent by the girl's family-priest to the boy's father. The priest was invited to a feast and lavish presents were offered to him.[23]

Three or five days before the marriage, the household deity Ganapati was worshiped at both bride and bridegroom's houses. One or two days before the marriage-day a ceremony in honour of ancestors and propitiation of the planets, was performed at the house of the bride and bridegroom.[24]

On the marriage day at the bride's house a platform generally in front of the entrance door of the house, about four feet square, was enclosed by four bamboo-posts one at each of the corners. At each of the four corners three bamboos were set in the ground leaving between them a space of about eight inches and round the three bamboos a red string was tied. In the space between the three bamboos, seven plain empty earthen pots were piled, the largest at the foot the smallest at the top. In the square, between the four piles of pots, which was called the '*chouri*', the bride and bridegroom sit when the marriage ceremonies were performed.[25] Entire caste was invited for community dinners given at the house of both- the bride and bridegroom, on the marriage-day or on some day before or after the marriage.[26]

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[20] *Akbarnama*, III, p. 791.

[21] Badaoni, Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, II, Tr. Wolsley Haig, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1925 (Reprint-1973, New Delhi), p. 315.

[22] Ibid.

[23] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat*, II, p. 90.

[24] Ibid., p. 90.

[25] Ibid., pp. 90-91.

[26] Ibid., p. 93.

Intermarriages:

As among the Meshri Banias, marriage was forbidden between '*dasa*' and '*visa*', Shravakas (Jains) also followed the same custom. A *dasa* Shrimali Bania never married with a *visa* Shrimali, and a *dasa* Porvad never married a *visa* Porvad. But unlike Meshris, member of corresponding minor divisions, sometimes intermarry. A *dasa* Shrimali married a *dasa* Porvad and a *dasa* Oswal marries a *dasa* Porvad or a *dasa* Shrimali.[27]

Ovington observed that all marriage were limited to one sect, and were contracted only between persons of the same profession. The merchant was debarred from entering into any league of love with a daughter of a goldsmith, shoemaker, or any other different professions. All persons were under a strict confinement, in their matrimonial ties and addresses to direct their passions and affections to those only of their own opinion and trade.[28]

In some cases in north Gujarat the difference of religion was not considered a hindrance to intermarriage. *Dasa* Shrimali Shravaka married with *dasa* Shrimali Meshri. The *dasa* and *visa* Porvad Shravakas married with *dasa* and *visa* Porvad Meshris.[29]

With a few exceptions, the Shravaks Bania marriage ceremony was the same as that performed by Meshri Banias. In Shrvaka Banias, on the second day of marriage, bridegroom and his friends were invited to a feast by the bride's father. The marriageable age of a boy was at least seven and upwards and of a girl from seven to twenty in some parts of north Gujarat.[30]

In the Ghanchi community, marriages were prohibited between near relations and within seven degrees of relationship. Marriage with wife's sister was allowed after the death of the wife. Marriage was generally conducted at early age.[31] In the marriages of Ghanchis, the bridegroom went to bride's house covered in a flower veil. The bride and bridegroom worship Hanuman immediately after they got married.[32]

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[27] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat*, II, p. 100.

[28] Ovington, p. 165.

[29] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat*, II, p. 100.

[30] Ibid., p. 100.

[31] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 1.

[32] Ibid., II, pp. 1-2.

Marriage customs among the Sunni Bohras of Gujarat, bridegroom and bride both had a conversation prior to the date of marriage. A thread was put on their wrists. A *mandap*[33] was erected at bride's house and bride had to assemble for *nikah*. They performed prayer in the mosque. Afterwards the crest of flowers was divided into several parts and distributed among the people:

> "લગ્નના ચાર પાંચ દિવસ પહેલા વર અને કન્યા બન્નેનેપીઠી ચોળવામાં આવતી. કાંડે મીઢળ બંધાતા. લગ્ન ગીતો ગાવાનો રીવાજ સામાન્ય હતો. કન્યાના આંગણે મંડપ બંધાતો અને એ મંડપમાં ય કન્યાના ઓટલે નિકાહનો વિધિ આટોપવામાં આવતો. આ વિધિ મસ્જીદમાં પણ યોજાતો. નિકાહ પ્રસંગે જાનેયાઓના ફૂલોની કલગી વહેચવામાં આવતી અને નિકાહના અંતે ખારેક લૂટવાવમાં આવતી."[34]

Before the *nikah* ceremony, bridegroom procession started from his house riding a horse or an elephant, with drumbeats (*parhgham*). When he came out from his house, boys of village tied a rope around his waist to take some amount of money, then only they allow bridegroom to go ahead:

> "નિકાહના વિધિ પહેલા વરને ઘોડા કે હાથી પર બેસાડીને પડધમ સહીત વરઘોડો કાઢવામાં આવતો. આમ વરઘોડો નીકળે ત્યારે ગામના યુવાનો માર્ગ આડે દોરડું બાંધીને વરઘોડાને આંતરતા અને વરપક્ષ તરફથી પચ્ચીસ પચાસ કે એકલો રૂપિયા અને નાળીયેર આપવામાં આવતા ત્યારે જ વરઘોડાને આગળ જવા દેવામાં આવતો."[35]

After all the ceremonies of marriage, arrangements were made for music (*qawwali*) and dance party, which continued till morning:

[33] Mandap is a particular place to perform marriage ceremony and rituals, which was made of four bamboos covered with a roof of palms and flowers, and in a square shape.

[34] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 49.

[35] Ibid.

"નિકાહનો વિધિ પતિ ગય પછી કવ્વાલી ય નાચગાના મહેફિલ યોજવાનો રીવાજ પણ હતો.

આવી મેહ્ફીલો રાતભર ચાલતી."[36]

In the Khoja community, the male members of bride and bridegroom family meet at the *Jamaatkhanah* or assembly lodge, three or four days before the date of marriage, in the presence of their friends, relatives, and *Mukhi* or *Jamaat* officer. The officer entered the names of the bride and bridegroom in a register. The father of the bridegroom gave a sum of Rs. 5 ¼ to the father of the bride. The sum received by the girl's father was handed over to *Jamaat* officer as the marriage contribution to the fund. The friends of bridegroom offer a copper or brass tray to *Jamaat* officer, containing from five to ten *seers* of sugar.[37]

The *Jamaat* officer, after repeating the hallowed names of the five or *Panj-tan*, that was Prophet Mohammad, Hazrat Ali, Bibi Fatima, Imam Hasan and Hussain; declared "I do hereby begin the wedding of (bridegroom's name), the son of (father's name), with (bride's name), the daughter of (father's name), to wed as did Fatima, the bright faced lady, daughter of our Lord and Prophet Mohammad with the Lord and the leader, the receiver of the testament of the chosen and pure, the Lord Ali, the son of Abu Talib."[38] Then the sugar tray was placed before the bride's father, who, in token of ratifying the compact, tastes a pinch of sugar which was then distributed among the people. This was the verbal compact.[39]

On the next morning, the written agreement was prepared. A thick parchment-like sheet of blank paper was taken together with trays full of dried fruit and sugar to the bride's house by the bridegroom's father, his friends accompanied by *Jamaat* officers. The *Jamaat* scribe begins the writing with the names of four arch angels in the four corners. Then entered the names of parties with their fathers and grandfathers, the names of the chief *Jamaat* officers of the day, and the dates on which the chief marriage ceremonies were to be performed. Saffron water was sprinkled over the sheet of paper, which, together with the sugar and dried fruit, was laid before the bridegroom's father, who laid the sheet on the

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[36] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 50.

[37] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 224.

[38] Ibid., pp. 224-225.

[39] Ibid., p. 225.

ground and on it placed an iron nail and four betel nuts and scattered some rice over it and betel nuts in an unused silk or cotton handkerchief and took it away.[40]

'*Kissa-i-Sanjan*' gives details about Gujarati *Garba*, group songs and dances, composed by the Parsis and sung by Parsi women on such occasions like '*Navjote*'[41] and wedding ceremonies.[42]

Among the Europeans, Dutch conducted their trading activities in India but did not leave much impact on social and cultural life of the people of India.[43] But Italian traveler P. Della Valle gives some interesting sidelights on the social aspect of Dutch colonial system. He says that special privileges were granted by the state to those Hollanders in the east who married and settled down in the Dutch colony of New Batavia, in Java, with their wives and families. For this reason many of those who could not secure European partners, had taken Indian, Armenian and Syrian women and they were baptized Christians.[44] Further he gives another incident that an Armada from Portugal was on its way to India and it was attacked by Dutch, some of the ships sunk and rest was captured. Among other booty on captured ships, there were three maidens and poor orphans of good descent.[45] These three maidens were taken by their captives to Surat, where the most eminent among the Dutch merchants strove to marry them.[46]

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[40] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, p. 225.

[41] The Navjote ceremony is the ritual through which an individual is inducted into the Zoroastrian religion and begins to wear the *Sedreh* (a holy thread) and *Kushti* (shirt). The term Navjote is used primarily by the Zoroastrians of India, while *sedreh pushi* is used primarily by the Zoroastrians of Iran. The word 'Navjote' is a Latinized form of the Parsi Gujarati compound of *nav* "new" and *jote* "reciter of prayer", "invoker", "sacrificer".

[42] *Kissa-i-Sanjan, Cf. The Parsis*, p. 40.

[43] *Social Cultural and Economic History of India (Modern Times)*, p. 2.

[44] Pietro Della Valle, I, p. 24.

[45] These were sent out from Portugal every year at the King's expense and with a royal dowry, with a view to their getting married in India and to help the people of the Portuguese colonies.

[46] Pietro Della Valle, p. 25.

Widow-Remarriage:

The evil of enforced widowhood existed in Gujarat. The prevalent custom among the urban communities – the Brahmins, the Banias and the kindred classes was that widowhood was enforced as an institution.[47] We come across the force of this convention which had become a social control on the minds of higher castes in the historical instance of merchant by the name Jagdu, his daughter (about V.S. 1300 i.e. 1244 A.D.), who was widowed just after the marriage. Jagdu, a millionaire and a devout Jain of Bhadreshwar (Kutch), at this calamity, came forward to marry her to another man. After having obtained the consent of the elders of his caste; but at this time, two old and clever widows of his caste, decked with rich ornaments, approached and spoke in clear terms as follows: '*if you are on look-out for a husband for your widow daughter, do find a new husband for us as well.*' At these bitter words of irony, Jagdu looked down for shame, and he refrained from taking the bold step against the caste conventions. As a result, Jagdu encouraged his daughter to a life of asceticism.[48] Shravaka Banias did not allow their widows to remarry. Polygamy was unusual, and divorce was never granted.[49]

In Ghanchis, widows were allowed to remarry, a widow might marry a younger brother of her deceased husband, but never the elder.[50] The widow and her new intended husband were seated facing each other on two low wooden-stools, and the ends of their garments were tied into a knot by a priest who was a Brahmin. Next, Ganapati was worshiped and the remarried widow throws grains of rice over them and brings their heads into close contact, thus completing the ceremony.[51]

But in Parsi community, widow-remarriage was allowed. As R.N. Majmudar mentions that the second marriage of a widow, whether she marries a bachelor or a widower, was

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[47] *Cultural History of Gujarat*, p. 154.

[48] Ibid., pp. 148-149.

[49] *Hindu Castes and Tribes of Gujarat*, II, p. 101-102.

[50] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 1.

[51] Ibid., p. 2.

called *cakarzan* marriage or *natra*, as distinguished from the first marriage called *shahzan* or royal marriage.[52]

The Sati Custom:

Sati system was also prevalent custom in the life of medieval India women. In Gujarat the prevalence of the practice of *sati* was a living institution, even when Al-Beruni visited India.[53] Many travellers had observed this evil custom of Hindu society when they visited Gujarat. When Mandelslo was in Cambay, two English merchants offered to take him a place near city where an Indian widow was to burn herself and become a *sati*. Her husband had been killed near Lahore, after getting this news she declared her determination to end her life. But the Governor of Cambay opposed her desire because it was the policy of Mughal Government and its officers to abolish this 'heathenish and barbarous custom'. The Governor pretended that as the news of her husband's death had not been confirmed, he could not give his consent to the action which she contemplated, and for which there might be cause to repent afterwards. His objection was to see whether the lapse of time would abate her passion to follow her husband into the other world. At last, finding that she was becoming daily, more and more insistent in her resolve, he permitted her to comply with the practices of her religion.[54]

Ovington observes that "*the Indian wives committed themselves with so much cheerfulness into the funeral flames with their dead husbands, because their sympathetic minds linked together from their infancy.*"[55] Mandelslo correctly explains the imperial attitude towards this ancient custom. No Hindu widow could immolate herself without the formal sanction of the Governor, and this was going on since Akbar's time. But the latter could only advice and delay his decision; if the woman remained firm then Governor was bound to grant the permission.[56] In his words "*the governor of Cambay had for a long time opposed her desire since it was the policy of the Mughal government and its officers to*

[52] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 157.

[53] *Cultural History of Gujarat*, p. 156.

[54] Mandelslo, pp. 42-43.

[55] Ovington, p. 190.

[56] Mandelslo, p. 43.

abolish by degrees this 'heathenish and barbarous custom'. He pretended that as the news of her husband's death had not been confirmed, he could not give consent to the action which she contemplated and for which there might be repent afterwards......... at last, finding that she was coming daily more and more insistent in her resolve, he permitted her to comply with the practice of her religion."[57] Mandelslo described the ceremony which he witnessed; a young woman had decided to sacrifice herself to show her love for her husband. She was not more than 20 years of age, but she came to the place prepared for the funeral pyre with so much self-control and cheerfulness. As Mandelslo said that she had dulled her senses with a dose of opium.[58] Here Mandelslo describes the imperial attitude towards this ancient custom.

***Purdah*:**

According to Manucci the *purdah* was strictly observed among the Muslim than among the Hindus.[59] Among the Muslims it was a great dishonour for a family when a lady was compelled to unveil herself.[60]

Child Birth Ceremonies:

Khoja merchants had many social observances and customs distinct from those of regular Muslims. The *chhati* or sixth day ceremony after birth differs from that performed by regular Gujarati Muslims. In this ceremony, a wooden stool or *bajot* was placed near the bed of mother, on which mother and child have been bathed and dressed. In the evening- a red pen, an ink-stand, a blank notebook, a knife and a garland of flowers were placed near to child. The pen, ink and paper were intended for the Goddess of fortune who was believed to write the destiny of the newborn child.[61]

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[57] Mandelslo, pp. 42-43.

[58] Ibid., pp. 43-44.

[59] Manucci, I, p.62.

[60] Ibid., II, p. 175.

[61] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 224.

Ceremonies Related to Death:

Parsis: The Parsis expose their dead in round structures known as *dokhmas*, generally called tower of silence. In places where there were no such towers, they unavoidably bury, but never burn.[62]

The towers of silence were constructed of solid masonry work on sanitary principles. The bodies were soon devoured by vultures. They carry the bodies to the tower during the day hours only.[63]

They performed some ceremonies in honour of the dead during the first three days, which were known as *sarosh* ceremonies. Most of these performed in their fire-temples (*agyari*). The other principal occasions for the performance of the ceremonies were the fourth or *chahrum*, the tenth or *dehum*, the thirtieth or *si-roz* and the anniversary or *saal-roz* day after death.[64]

Banias: The religious rites for the Banias were performed by Brahmins. *Phulpara*, was one of Surat's suburbs on the river, where Hindu funerals were performed.[65] Fryer describes them "*in the river doing their devotions, which consists in washing and praying. The elder sat in a row, where the men and women came down together to wash, having lungies about their waists only, which before they put on; they select a Brahmin of their proper caste to hold their vest. At their coming up out of the water they bestow their largess of rice and dahl (Indian pulses) and the Brahmin his benediction, by impressing a mark answerable to the castes on their foreheads, which is they live, purely on benevolence.*"[66]

Khojas: *Samarachhanta* or the holy drop was a unique feature in the Khojas. This ceremony was conducted with the permission of the dying person. If the dying person

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[62] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, III, p. 215.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., II, p. 224.

[65] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 35.

[66] Fryer, II, pp. 257, 288.

agreed for the ceremony, Rs. 5 to 500 or larger amount was deposited to the *Jamaat*. Then a Sindhi knowing Khoja was called to read the books of the ten incarnations *Das Avataar*.[67]

The ritual involved a *Jamaat* officer who diluted a cake of Karbala clay in the water, and to save the departing soul from the temptation of the Archfiend, who was believed to be present, offering a cup of false nectar, moistens the lips, and sprinkled the water on the face, the neck and the chest of the dying person. The touch of the holy drop was believed to relieve the death agony. If the deceased was old, the hair was dyed after death with henna. A garland of cakes of Karbala clay tied round the neck of the corpse.[68]

Festivals:

Banias: No description of Hindu festival *Diwali* would be complete without *Navaratri* (nine nights) and *Dasehara* (tenth day after *Navaratri*). These *Navaratris* were sacred to *Garba,* generally amorous deities sung in the streets of Gujarat. A few oil lamps were placed in the centre of the area, close to which were placed a virgin couple – "a bonny youth and maiden fair."[69]

A congregation of women of all age groups circle round and round, taking up a refrain. They repeated in chorus a verse sung by one and, at times, two women, keeping time to clap of hands. The hero of the songs was Krishna, who was in company of the legendry 16000 *Gopikas* (cowherdesses) maddened by his charm, by the enchanting tones of his *murli* (flute) in the by-lanes of Brindaban (near Mathura).[70]

To be allowed to join the folk dance *Garba* was an honour.[71] In other places, especially in temples, Garbas sung by males.[72] The end of *Navaratri* is called *Dasehara.*[73]

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[67] *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*, II, p. 229.

[68] Ibid.

[69] *Gujarat and Gujaratis,* pp. 253-254.

[70] Ibid., p. 254.

[71] Ibid., p. 255.

[72] Ibid, p. 257.

[73] Ibid.

Diwali comes after 20 days of *Dasehara*. A day before *Diwali*, which is called *Dhanterasa* or *Dhan – Trayodashi*, when the merchants brought their rich hoards into one room of their houses, and after gloating over the heap, offer prayers to it, sprinkled it with red ochre and kneeling, requests the presiding deity not to take unto her wings. The deity presiding over wealth was *Lakshmi*.[74] Next day i.e. *Diwali*, which sacred to *Saraswati* (the goddess of learning and music) and all the shops and records were solemnly worshipped. The worship was called *Vahipuja*.[75]

Holi was the season of colours (*rang*) and music (*raag*). It was related to the worship of lord Krishna. It was not only celebrated by the Vaishnavas but also by the other castes as well.[76]

The *Baleva* was another popular festival among Banias it was also called *Naliari Purnima*, Europeans used to call this festival 'coconut-day'. On this full moon day of the month of August, the violence of the monsoon was supposed to have come to an end, and father Neptune was supposed to be ready, on the customary propitiations, to allow ships to have a safe voyage.[77]

Kartiki Purnima, was the festival when people celebrate the victory of Shiva over the demon *Tripurasura*.[78]

Parsis: Parsis were very close knit group and their festivals were celebrated almost strictly within the community, and confined to the homes, community and temples. In Zoroastrian society, celebrations were closely communal and, as a rule, non Parsis were not allowed into their places of worship. Their important festivals were: *Pateti* (New Year) which falls sometimes in August and it was according to the Parsi calendar, not according to the *fasli* or Iranian calendar, which was not recognized in India. Another important festival was *Khordad Sal*, the birth anniversary of Prophet Zoroaster. *Muktad* was another

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[74] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, p. 259.

[75] Ibid., p. 260.

[76] Ibid. p. 296.

[77] Ibid., p. 274.

[78] Ibid., p. 262.

important festival. It is *Zend* term which means the 'saved' or 'released'. It was all soul day. Parsis in Iran prayed and fasted five and ten days for expiation for their own sin, and more as offering for 'repose of the souls' of their relatives.[79] *Zardosht* was the day commemorating the demise of Zarthrushtra. *Adar Rojnu Parab* was the birth of fire. *Jamshed-i-Navroz* was celebrated on the first day of the first month of Zoroastrian year. This festival is also mentioned in the – *Shahnama* of Firdausi.[80]

Bohras: *Moharram*, the festival which commemorates the martyrdom of the Prophet Mohammad's grandson – *Hazarat* Imam Hussain. It was mourning with great religious fervour by the Muslims, especially the Shia community.[81] This festival starts at 1st day of *Moharram* and lasts for ten days.[82]

Eid- ul- Fitr, this festival comes after the month of holy *Ramzan*, which is popularly known as the 'festival of fasts'. This festival is celebrated at the end of *Ramzan*, it was an occasion of fasting and rejoicing.[83]

Jain Banias: Jain community celebrated many festivals. *Paryusana Parva* was organized in the month of *Bhadrapada* (mid-August to mid-September) of the Hindu calendar. It extended from the fifth day to fourteenth day of the bright moon (*shukla paksha*). In this festival Jain had to observe ten universal supreme virtues in daily practical life[84]:

णमो अरिहंताणं (I bow to the *Arihantas*)

णमो सिद्धाणं (I bow to the *Siddhas*)

णमो आयरियाणं (I bow to the *Aacharyas*)

[79] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, pp. 281-282; Also see *The Parsis*, pp. 28-29.

[80] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, pp. 281-282.

[81] Ibid., pp. 286-290.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] *Hindi Vishvakosh*, Nagri Pracharini Sabha, V, Varanasi, 1965, pp. 46-52.

णमो उवज्झायाणं (I bow to the *Upadhyayas*)

णमो लोए सब्बासाहूणं (I bow to the spiritual practioners)

ऐसो पञ्च णमोकारो

सव्व पावपणासणों

मंगलाण च सव्वेसिम

पढ़मे हवई मंगलं

(This fivefold obeisance mantra was aimed to destroy all sins and obstacles, and of all auspicious repetitions, is the first and foremost.)

The cardinal principle was attainment of salvation – the supreme ideal for mundane soul.

Mahavira Jayanti is when Jain celebrates the birth anniversary of the 24th and the last *tirthankar* (Prophet), Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, who spread the message of salvation to the world and had many followers. He preached non-violence. Mahavira initiated a simple fivefold path for the house-holders: *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Astey* (not to steal), *Brahmacharya, Aparigraha* (non-acquisition of property) and *Satya* (truth).[85]

One can thus discern that there was considerable variance in the social customs related to merchants. There seems great emphasis laid by each community on the pursuance of their rights and customs. It is a pity that such aspects have not attracted due attention of historians of the region as yet.

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[85] *Hindi Vishvakosh*, op. cit., pp. 46-52.

Chapter -5

Merchants-Mughal Nexus

Gujarat is the region which was always valued for its rich resources, trade and commerce and business class since early times. During the Mughal period, we come across names of big merchants from different sources, which contributed considerably in overseas trade and earned substantial money. This wealth gave them a prominent position in the society as well as in the state. They utilized their wealth to gain favours from Mughal administration at local level.

This chapter intends to focus the role and nexus of certain important merchants like Shantidas Zaveri, Virji Vora and Mulla Abdul Ghafur. The rich nature of information pertaining to the above aspects is culled from the mine of information contained in Imperial Farmans, *Ain-i-Akbari. Mirat-i-Ahamadi, Jain Aitihasik Rasmala, Amdabad no Itihas*, *English Factory Records* and the accounts of Thevenot and Mandelslo.

Shantidas Zaveri: The Gujarati and Persian record reveal that Shantidas Zaveri of Ahmadabad commanded respect among the ruling elite in India.[1] In the time of Mughal emperor Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, Shantidas was the court jeweler and financer, who was extremely instrumental in catering to the needs of the luxurious court at Agra and Delhi. Shantidas, flourished during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan. He had immense resources as a financier, and business connections as a jeweler, which enabled him to enjoy considerable favour and influence at the imperial court at Delhi.[2] His relations with the imperial court were cordial.

On the occasion of Shahjahan's accession to the throne, Shantidas presented Arabian horses to the Emperor by the way of *Peshkash*.[3] Emperor approved of a roan horse amongst them, which was appreciatively named "*Nazar-i-Mubarak*".[4] The emperor bestowed a gift of an elephant from the court and a sum of one lakh of rupees[5]

According to Jain tradition Prince Khurram addressed Shantidas as *mama* or maternal uncle.[6] Jahangir gave this title of *mama*[7] to Shantidas and he was permitted for access to the

[1] *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, op. cit., p. 23.

[2] *A History of Gujarat*, II, p. 140.

[3] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, P. 207.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, pp. 5-6.

[7] Ibid., p. 2.

Mughal *Harem*. According to Maganlal Vakhatchand the royal ladies treated him as their brother.[8]

Jahangir had entrusted Shantidas the key position of *Nagarsheth*[9] of Ahmadabad.[10] As the *Nagarsheth* of Ahmadabad, he acted as chief merchant in the town, and also mediated between the larger merchant community of the city and the Mughal administration.[11]

An illustration of his indispensible position can be discerned during the Murad Baksh's revolt in 1657 A.D. Murad Baksh took financial assistance worth Rs.5,00,000/- from the merchants of Surat and Rs.50,00,000/- from the merchants of Ahmadabad, and out of this whole amount, Rs.5,50,000/- was taken from Manekchand (son of Shantidas)[12] and a brother of Shantidas.[13]

Later in the war of succession he travelled north to the combined camp of Murad Baksh and Aurangzeb, and he received a '*farman*' from Murad Baksh, guaranteeing repayment of this loan of Rs.5,50,000/-.[14] Murad Baksh issued this *farman* not as a prince but as *de facto* sovereign, under his new Imperial title of '*Abul Muzaffar Murawwat-ud-Din-Muhammad Murad Baksh Shah Ghazi*', it was addressed to the officers whom he had left behind him in Gujarat. These orders were issued at the request of Shantidas, on 1st of *Shawwal* in the year of his accession i.e. the 22nd June 1658.[15] After four days, Aurangzeb arrested Murad Baksh and later killed him. However, he accepted the responsibility of Murad Baksh's debt, and Shantidas was able to obtain a *farman* from Aurangzeb concerning repayment.

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[8] *Amadabadno Itihas*, op. cit., pp. 25-27.

[9] There is a controversy about the position of *Nagarsheth* held by Shantidas, in the historians' view none of the *farman* issued by Mughals added this title before his name, but Maganlal has given interesting story about it. *Amadabadno Itihas*, pp. 125-126.

[10] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, p. 2.

[11] *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, p. 127.

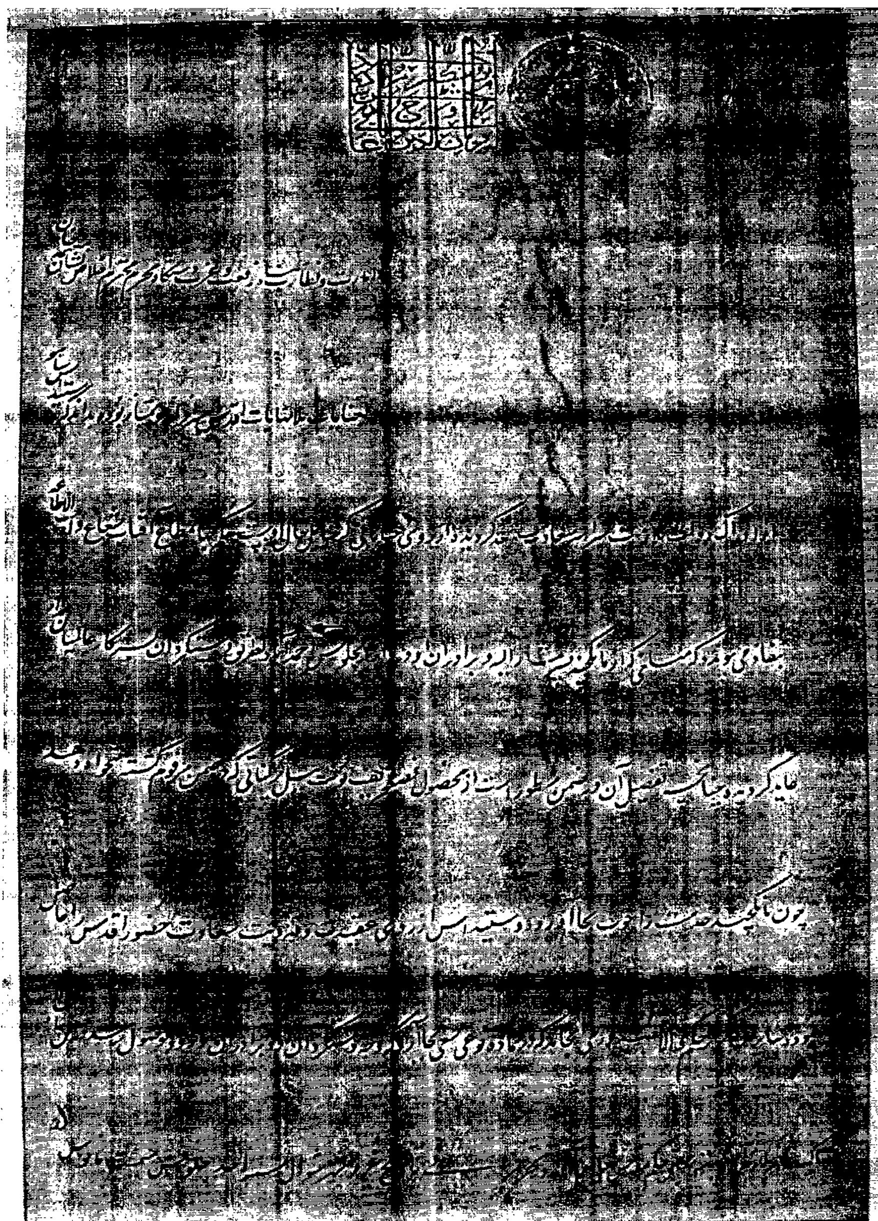
[12] *Studies in the History of Gujarat*, op. cit., p. 16.

[13] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 211; Also see Commissariat, M.S., 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', J.U.B., IX (July), 1940, p. 13; *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 127.

[14] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 211; Also see *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 127.

[15] *Studies in the History of Gujarat*, p. 59; Also see 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', op. cit., p. 15.

More importantly, Aurangzeb used him as an intermediary to conciliate the people of Ahmadabad, and especially the wealthy business community. In a later *farman* he was permitted to leave Aurangzeb's camp and return home.[16]



XV. Farman of Murad Bakhsh as Emperor about the repayment of the loan of Rs. 5,50,000 advanced by Manekchand and others during the Civil War (June 22, 1658)

Farman which was issued by Murad Bakhsh as an Emperor
(22nd June 1658)

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[16] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 127.

Shantidas was a religious man and spent his resources freely for religious endowments. The details about the construction of magnificent Jain temple in a suburb of Ahmadabad are given in a document in Sanskrit versified treatise called *Chintamani Prashasti* (A eulogy for the temple of *Chintamani Parswanath* dated V.S. 1697/ 1640 A.D.).[17]

This temple was constructed in 1621 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Jahangir by Shantidas and his elder brother Vardhaman. It was situated in the flourishing suburb of *Bibipur* in Ahmadabad later on this place was called *Saraspur*. The temple was completed in 1625 A.D.[18]

After twenty years of the completion of this temple, in 1645 A.D., Shah Jahan appointed Prince Aurangzeb as *subahdar* or viceroy of Gujarat. The Prince ordered, the beautiful temple built by Shantidas to be desecrated, and it was converted into a mosque under the name of '*Quwwat-ul-Islam*' (the might of Islam).[19]

Shantidas stood high in favour with the Emperor at this time, as may be judged from nearly a dozen royal *farmans* granted in his favour by Shah Jahan in the course of his long reign.[20] Commissariat introduced certain *farmans* in the article entitled 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Mughal Gujarat' drawing attention to the fact that Shah Jahan reversed an action taken by Prince in favour of Jain banker at the court of Delhi.[21]

An Imperial *farman*, dated July 3, 1648, Ghairat Khan and other officials in Gujarat were directed to restore the building to Shantidas and to make complete restitution for all damage done.[22]

The *farman* explicitly reveals that the emperor made arrangements for restoration of the temple for the worship of the Jain community, and also ordered that the ubiquitous

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[17] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, pp. 8-9; Also see *A History Gujarat*, II, pp. 140-141; 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 13.

[18] *A History Gujarat*, II, p. 141.

[19] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 194; Also see *A History Gujarat*, II, pp. 140-141; 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', pp. 13-14; Thevenot, p. 13-14.

[20] *A History Gujarat*, II, pp. 142.

[21] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 14.

[22] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, pp. 8-9; Also see 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', pp. 12-15; Mandelslo, pp. 12-15, 101-102; Thevenot, pp. 13-14.

Bohras who had removed some of the materials from the temple should be forced either to return the same or to pay the same."[23]

This imperial *farman* gave some satisfaction to Shantidas and his community. However the people of the Jain community were not happy and they stopped worshipping there.[24] Thevenot informs us, after the imperial order Muslims never used this building as a mosque.[25] However imperial order showed the influence of Jain merchants, especially the Shantidas, over the Mughal Emperor. This anecdote demonstrates the prevalence of justice by an Emperor against a prince, who was also operating as governor of the *subah*.

Another noteworthy instance is when Shah Jahan showed his regard to Jain community in the imperial *farmans*.[26] He issued these *farmans* for public interest, they related to the grant made by Emperor Shah Jahan, to Shantidas Zaveri and to his descendants, on lease or *ijara* of the village *shankheshwar* in the *pargana* of Munjpur,[27] which is situated in North Gujarat.

Shantidas stands forth in these documents as representative of wealthy and powerful *Svetamber* Jain community of western India. Emperor conferred upon him and his heirs the responsibility of lease of the village within the limits, in which the sacred Jain temples were situated. While ordering the *jagirdars* to continue the lease of the village to Shantidas and his heirs for a sum of Rs. 1,050/- per year, the Emperor especially added that- 'the above mentioned *sahu* (Shantidas) having paid the necessary dues to the *jagirdars*, is enjoined to make strenuous efforts to promote the said village and the welfare of its inhabitants.[28]

The prominent businessmen of Surat, viz Virji Vora[29], a Jain and Bhimji Parekh, a Vaishnava Bania; also had very good relations with Mughal officials and custom officers. They were well versed in Persian, the court language and the Gujarati, which was the business and the accounts language, the possessions of a large capital, enabled them to

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[23] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 14.

[24] Ibid.

[25] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', pp. 14-15; Thevenot, p. 22.

[26] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 17.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

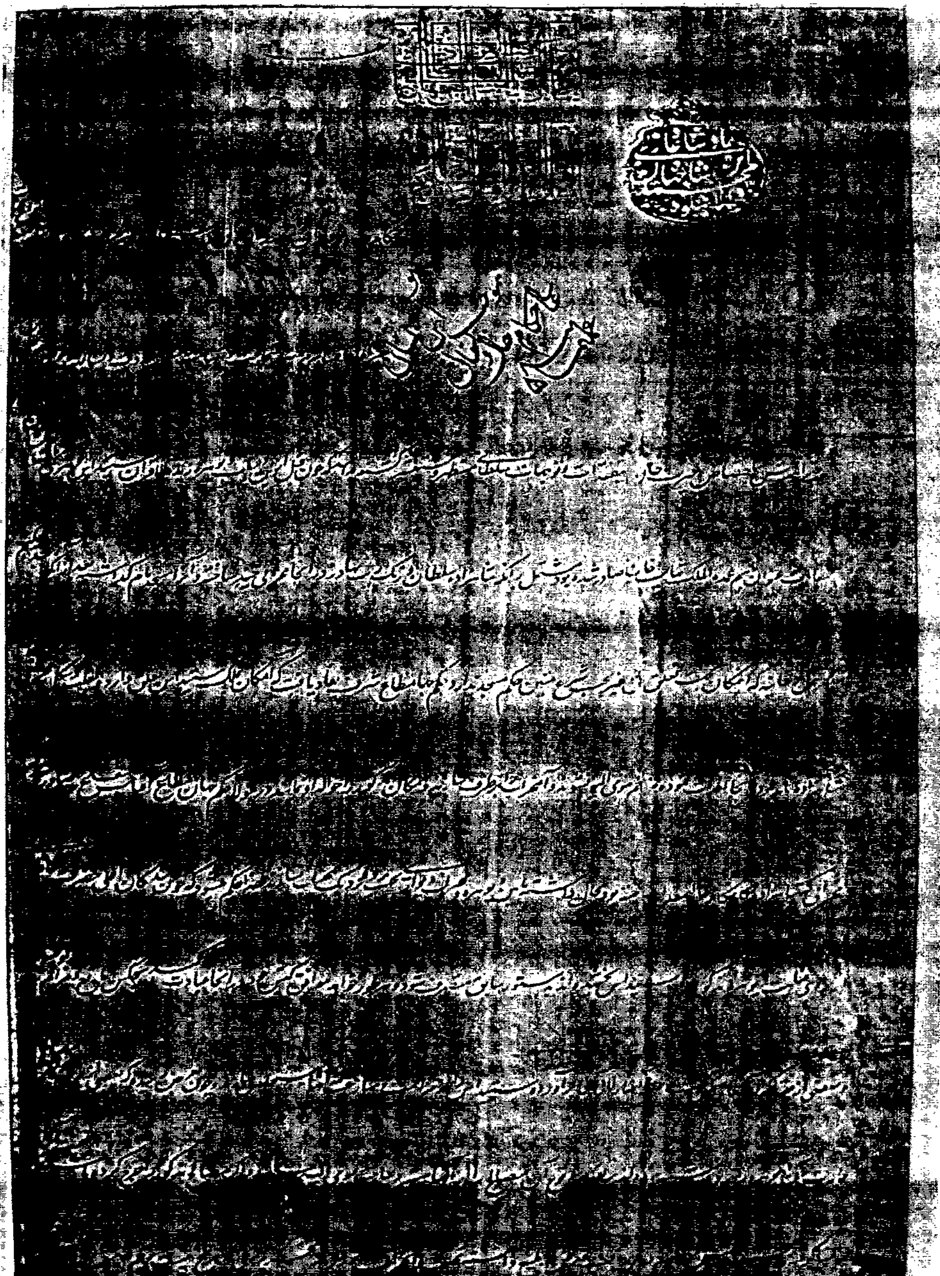
[29] "He is a vastly rich Bania and a friend of mine is reckoned to be worth at least eight millions." Thevenot, p. 22.

conduct wholesale business with Persia, Arabia, East Africa and the Red Sea where they had their own agents.

Yet another interesting example of favourable Mughal relations was *farmans* issued for the *Lumpaka* or *Lomka* sect of Jains at Ahmadabad. This sect emerged in V.S. 1508 (1452 A.D.). Once the *Mahajans* of *Lumpaka* sect residing at Ahmadabad, they had certain differences with the *Svetamber* Jains of Ahmadabad. In view of existing conflict *Lumpakas* complained to the Emperor Shah Jahan that the *Mahajans* of *Svetamber* sect did not maintain social contact with them. They requested the Emperor to mediate on their behalf.

The emperor in pursuance of the policy of non-interference with the social or religious differences among the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire, issued *farman* to the officers in Gujarat thus 'the forming of matrimonial alliances and inter-dining were dependent upon the desire and willingness of both the parties, so no one should trouble another on account of this and the officers should not find faults with anyone in this matter.[30]

[30] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 18.



IX. Nishan of Dara Shukoh directing the restoration of the Jain temple at Ahmadabad which had been turned into a mosque by Prince Aurangzeb (July 3, 1648)

Nishan issued by Dara Shukoh to restore the Chintamani Temple (3rd July, 1648)



Portrait of Shantidas Zaveri

(1590-1660 A.D.)

(Source : 'Ahmadabad Next : Towards A World Heritage City', Times Group, Times of India, New Delhi, 2010, p. 40.)

Virji Vora: Another eminent Jain merchant of Surat was Virji Vohra, generally maintained amicable relations with the Mughal administration in Surat. Often his commercial interests were complimentary to those governors such as Mirza Arab and Muiz-ul-Mulk.[31] The governor needed Virji Vora's assistance, and most of the time worked on favourable terms with him. As a result Virji Vora secured special concessions from them. This is reflected in the frequent English complaints against Vora's overweening postures, because of his friendly relations with the local Mughal government.

[31] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 144.

During the reign of Shah Jahan business house of Virji Vora played an important role in the economic life. He was a business magnate of Surat who became influential with Ishaq Beg (later on he became Governor of Surat).[32] The English often used the facilities provided by Virji Vora for transmitting large amounts of money from Surat to Agra through *hundis*.[33] He exacted heavy *batta* or discount or difference in exchange rates for transmitting *mahmudis, pagodas* and assorted currencies in rupees. His letters of credit to the English helped them several times in their financial difficulties. In 1647 A.D., he financed the English Company's voyage to Pegu in Burma and advanced a huge amount.[34]



Virji Vora

(1584-1670 A.D.)

(Source : *Gujaratna Ghadvaiya* by Makarand Mehta)

[32] *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 86.

[33] *EFI*, 1624-29, p. 190.

[34] *EFI*, 1646-50, pp. 208, 291.

In the first half of the 17th century, the English had considerable difficulty in dealing with the customs, port authorities and the Mughal governor of Surat. Ishaq Beg was the port authority (Shah Bandar) at Surat in 1616 A.D. and was later appointed as its governor in 1619 A.D. He was replaced by Jamshed Beg for a short period from this post, but he returned to Surat in 1621 A.D.[35] By October 1623 A.D. Virji Vora had already established contacts with Ishaq Beg and Thomas Rastell, the President of English Factory there.[36] In 1623-24 A.D., relations between the English and the Mughal governor got estranged. Consequently Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-27 A.D.) imposed restriction on English people, activities and properties. This stern action came as an aftermath of seizing of Indian ships and cargo by the English in Surat and elsewhere.[37] Peace was secured by an agreement between the English factory and Surat authorities on September 7, 1624. Among the signatories to this agreement was Virji Vora, who acted as *mahajan* for taking surety.[38]

In 1650 A.D., the English asked the governor of Surat to nominate some Malabaris who were known to Virji Vora, to issue passes to them. Since the English were worried to which Malabari merchants would obtain passes. Sometimes they mistakenly gave it to people, who later turned out to be pirates. In this case the governor entrusted Virji Vora as an intermediary, and a guarantor an interpreter of merchants' affairs.[39]

When Shahjahan fell ill his son, Murad Baksh, who was the '*Subahdar*' of Gujarat, revolted, and prepared to seize power. For the purpose he got a loan of Rs.5,00,000/- from the merchants of Surat. This sum was advanced by Virji Vora and another merchant, on behalf of all merchants of the city.[40]

In 1664 A.D., he acted with others as a representative of Surat's merchants. This was the year of Shivaji's first raid on the city, and Shivaji presented his demands for ransom to the governor of Surat, and three leading merchants of Surat, one of whom was Virji Vora.[41]

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[35] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 138.

[36] *EFI*, 1622-23, pp. 114, 231, 276.

[37] Ibid., 1618-21, pp. 89, 101, 123, 148.

[38] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 138.

[39] *EFI*, 1637-41, pp. 108-109; *EFI*, 1946-50, p. 331.

[40] Sarkar, Jadunath, *History of Aurangzeb*, 5 vols., II, Calcutta, 1924-30, pp. 298-299.

[41] *EFI*, 1661-64, p.299.

After this raid, there is a report that Virji Vora, and another merchant went to Aurangzeb to ask for the better protection of town.[42]

Jahan Beg and Virji Vora were sent to the court of Aurangzeb to seek permission of construction of outer fortress of the city:

"એ બંધાવાની રજા લેવાને જહાનબેગ તથા વીરજી વોરા ઔરંગજેબ બાદશાહ પાસે ગયા હતા."[43]

In 1639 A.D., Virji Vora was summoned to the court by Shahjahan to give an account of the grievances, he and other merchants had against the governor of Surat. Virji Vora generally maintained amicable relations with the Mughal administration in Surat. Often his commercial interests were complimentary to those of governors such as Mirza Arab and Muiz-ul-Mulk.[44] They needed Virji Vora's assistance, and most of the time worked on favourable terms with him. As a result Virji Vora secured special concessions from them. This is reflected in the frequent English complaints against Vora's overweening postures, because of his friendly relations with the local Mughal government. But Vora had his own share of trouble with governor such as Masih-us-Zaman, who also came into conflict with English. A long letter from President Fremlen at Swally to London on January 4, 1639 states: "Amongst other things you will find frequent complaints of our governor's most impetuous proceedings against all sorts of people subsisting under his command, and how far his rapine had been extended against Virji Vora and almost all that anything to lose; in which number our broker and 'mody' (stewart) most unjustly suffered because they were our servants........" The letter goes on to say that Masih-us-Zaman was replaced by Muiz-ul-Mulk, and Virji Vora "sent for court to answer in person." According to the letter, Vora seems to have been imprisoned for a brief period by Masih-us-Zaman, which indicates the stern treatment was made to businessmen, even great ones such as Virji Vora.[45]

As head of *mahajan*, he acted as the ultimate authority within his group. On other occasions he acted as intermediary, between his *mahajan* community and the government.

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[42] Kamdar, K.H., *'Virji Vora- Surat millionaire Mahajan'*, J.G.R.S., XXV, October, 1968, p. 276.

[43] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, pp. 1-2.

[44] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 144.

[45] *EFI*, 1637-41, pp. 99, 108-110.

He was called by the officials to advice on commercial matters. He was updated for government decision affecting the interests of his group.

At the same time, he interpreted such decisions to his fellow community for official action.[46] This institution of merchants was created in order to safeguard interests of business communities in settling internal trade disputes, as also as a kind of 'lobby' or 'pressure group' that could call a boycott and suspension of general business, or even mass migration to other areas in protest or religious oppressions.[47]

In 1669 A.D., *Qazi* of Surat in persuasion of the policy of religious conversion converted a few Banias into Islam. Bhimji Parekh and Virji Vora as a mark of protest declared a strike against the action. This was almost like a non-violent non co-operation movement which lasted for weeks. It forced Aurangzeb into submission. About 8,000 merchants, led by their *mahajans* or mercantile association, migrated to nearby Broach port as a mark of protest. Another Mughal governor welcomed them. He rebuked the Surat authorities, saying that the non-Muslims were important subjects of the Mughal Empire.[48]

Both the Jain merchants Shantidas and Virji Vora had connections with the Mughal court. When Shantidas neglected his duty as a court jeweler and stopped sending gifts to the court, he was reminded of his lapse through a *nishan* by Dara Shukoh[49]:

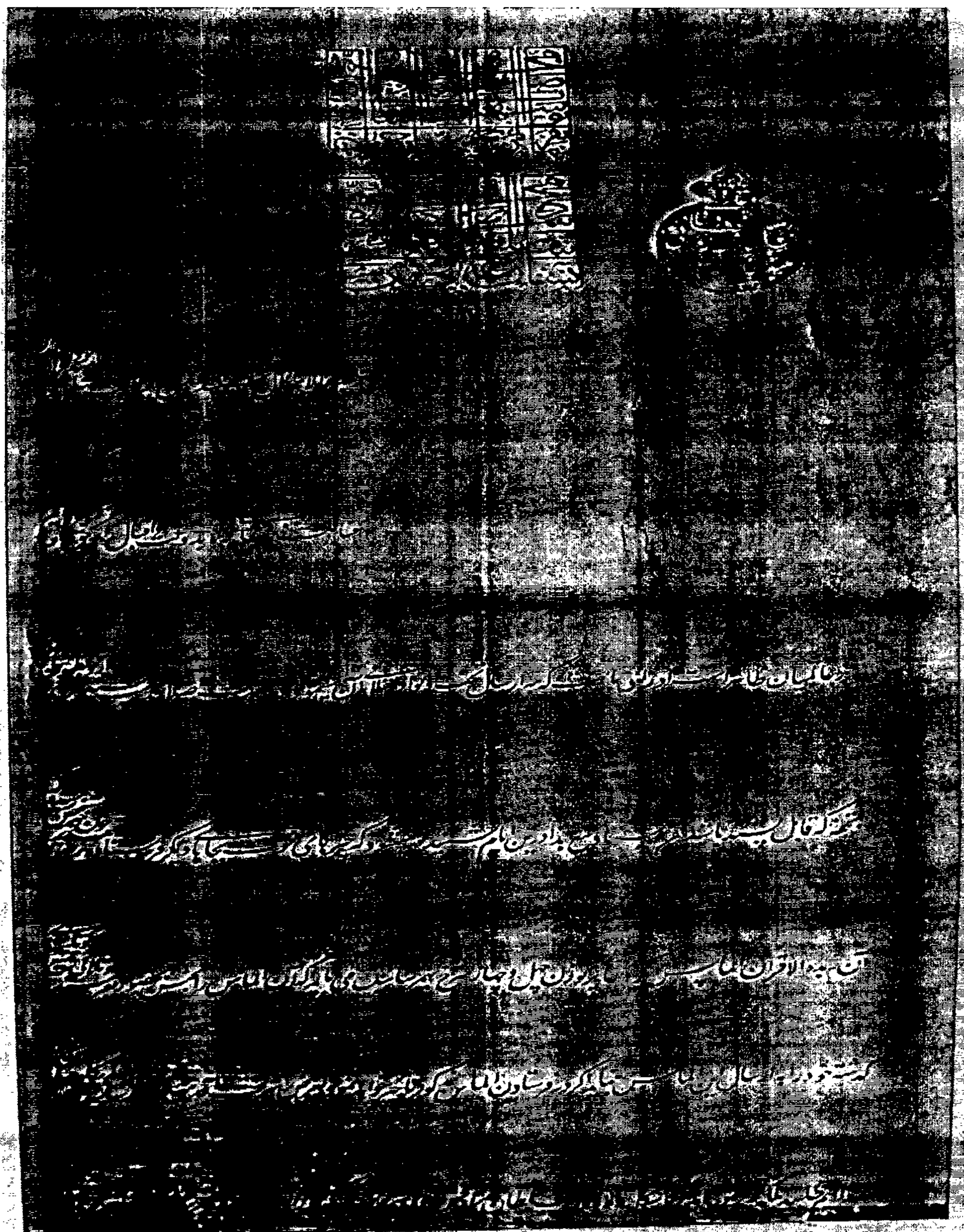
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[46] *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, pp. 125-126; *Gujaratna Ghadvaiya*, op. cit., p. 18.

[47] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, pp. 138-139.

[48] Mehta, R.N., 'Urban Surat-An Archeological, Topographical and Toponymical Perspective', J.M.S.U.B., vol. 22-23, 1973-74, pp. 18-29.

[49] *Imperial Mughal Farman in Gujarat*, P. 34.



X. Nishan of Dara Shukoh instructing Shantidas to forward to the court a valuable diamond in his possession (Sept. 1, 1655)

Nishan of Dara Shukoh to Shantidas demanding for a valuable diamond to the court

(1st Sept, 1655)

Shantidas maintained cordial relations with the Mughal court by regular supplies of expensive gifts and rarities.[50]

Shantidas enjoyed enormous prestige and influence so that he was appointed as '*Subahdar*' of Gujarat by Shahjahan after the recall of Saif Khan.[51] It was most unusual for a merchant to be allowed to exercise such high political and administrative functions.

Mulla Abdul Ghafur: Shipping at Surat was controlled by the Muslims, as owners and sailors. The construction of Indian Ocean going Ships had steadily increased, so that while there 50 Ships at Surat in 1650 A.D., their number had increased to 112 by the end of the 17th century.[52]

The Muslim ship owners, who were the most important exporters and importers at Surat, could function only with the help of two other kinds of merchants in the city who were exclusively Hindu. Every merchant needed the help of a broker and a *sarraf*, and the trade of the city was carried on by the combination of shipper, merchant, broker and *sarraf*. Thus Abdul Ghafur had a broker called Gangadas.[53]

As per the available sources Mulla Abdul Ghafur, the wealthiest Bohra merchant of the city, probably came to Surat in late sixties from the northern town of *Pattan*.[54] Alexander Hamilton, who knew Abdul Ghafur, writes: "Abdul Ghafur, a *mohemedan* that I was acquainted with, drove a trade equal to the English East India Company, for I have known fit out in a year about 20 sail of ships between 300 and 800 tons, and none of them had less of his own stock than 10,000 pounds and some of them had 25,000 and after that foreign

[50] Akhtar, Jawaid, 'Shantidas a Great Merchant-Jeweler of Seventeenth Century Ahmadabad - The Dutch Evidence', Aligarh Papers on History, C.A.S., Dept. of History, AMU, Aligarh, I.H.C., Bangalore, 1997, p. 175.

[51] Van Santen, W.H., *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagniein Gujarat en Hindustan*, unpublished Ph.D thesis, Leiden University, 1982, p. 152, Cf.' Shantidas a great Merchant....', op. cit., p. 176.

[52] Chandra, Satish, 'India's Maritime Tradition: A Review', in *Sufis, Sultans and Feudal Orders*, Eds. Mansura Haider, N.Delhi, 2004, p. 326.

[53] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 84.

[54] Ibid., p. 77.

stock was sent away, he behold to have as much more of an inland for the following year's market."[55]

Deepak Bardolikar also supports this view in his *Sunni Vahora,* he says that Ghafur commanded a high place among the Gujarati merchants and he was the owner of nineteen ships and conducting local and international business successfully.[56] Abdul Ghafur was the last great merchant of the century. Manucci speaks of him as "the most powerful merchant at Surat, and owns over twenty ships of his own."[57]

He had been a Mulla (expounder of sacred law) in a mosque before he appeared at Surat. The members of Mulla Abdul Ghafur's family were always called Mullas, sometime Maulanas.[58] He is called 'Mulla' just because of his association with the mosque or probably he had gone for *Haj* and was generally addressed as Mulla. He belonged to the community of Sunni Bohras, because the member of Pattani *Jamaat* of Surat (a *Sunni* community) regarded him as one of their ancestors. The grandson of Ghafur built a mosque in 1723 A.D. which is still in the use by this *jamat.*[59]

He was immensely wealthy and lived affluently, he had built a large house in *Saudagarpura*, and interestingly enough he had a garden in the northern suburbs of the city, and a wharf for his shipping to the south. The garden of Ghafur earns special mention such as in 1711 A.D. when *Delawar Khan*, newly appointed governor at Surat, was coming to the city, spent a few days in this garden before entering the town. Similarly no private person could aspire after a marine establishment so far down the river. But Ghafur had his wharf at the village called *Athwa*. By all accounts, he was a great shipping magnate and according to B.G Gokhale his family had some thirty four ships between 1707 A.D. and 1736 A.D.[60] Mughal Emperor bestowed the title of *Malek-ut-Tujjar* to Abdul Ghafur and exempted him from *mehsool* (tax) up to one lakh.[61]

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[55] Hamilton, II, pp. 147-148; Also see *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries*, p. 181; *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, p. 35.

[56] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 27.

[57] Manucci, III, pp. 292-293.

[58] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 206.

[59] Ibid, p. 78 (fn), 30.

[60] *Surat in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 127

[61] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 27.

Gujaratis, who traded with *Malaya* in the 1670s under license from the Dutch, visited Malacca and Queda. Abdul Ghafur's two junk and Mohammad Chalebi's ship 'welcome' made regular voyages to Queda.[62] Some Gujarati traders kept up their trade with Iran because of their close links with the Europeans.[63] Mulla Abdul Ghafur was one of them. By 1670s Dutch compelled Gujarati merchants to obtain their permission before sending ships to Siamese ports, and a few eminent merchants of Surat, like Mulla Ghafur, Minas and Haji Qadir etc. participated in it.[64]

The decline of Mughal Empire and the raids by Shivaji affected Surat adversely. But the Gujaratis continued to build more ships and in these years, for the first time, they were sent their vessels, admittedly only a few, to Canton and Manila. The fleet numbered well over a hundred sea going vessels of which the Mughal normally had two at sea while Ghafur controlled seventeen.[65] This could easily challenge comparison with any of the European trading concerns at Surat. These ships he would deploy every year in the widest possible arc of trade in Indian Ocean, from Manila to Mocha.

The '*Nakhudas*' in command of these ventures were either his own relatives or important businessmen in the city connect with him in trade and society. The '*Nakhudas*' were under Ghafur's strict control and would not deviate in the slightest from the trading and sailing directions they received at selling out from Surat. Ghafur was however an individual, operating with some support from his immediate family and close business associates. He would rely in some measures upon the support of his *Jamat* but he could never draw upon the kind of social and political support available to the Dutch company.[66]

During 1690s, no Indian ship was allowed to proceed beyond Jeddah as the navigation of the stretch between that port and Suez was a closely guarded monopoly of a group of merchants who exercised it with the help of the *Sharifian* clan at *Jeddah*. Mulla Ghafur did successfully run this blockade once at the close of the 17th century but was heavily fined by the authorities of Jeddah, the following year of it and did not attempt it again, in the

[62] *EFI*, 1670-77, pp. 277, 237, 191, 226.

[63] *EFI*, 1670-77, pp. 202, 276 ; Also see *EFI*, 1678-84, p. 256.

[64] *EFI*, 1670-77, pp. 233, 135.

[65] *India and Indian Ocean 1500-1800 A.D.*, op. cit., p. 135.

[66] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 13.

'Mocha report'[67] of 1699 A.D. It was said that the '*Nakhudas*' of Ghafur were fined 800 ducats Jeddah for a ship which went to Suez the year before.[68]

In the second half of the 17th century, a new dimension was discernable viz ship piracy. The first pirate attack seems to have come 1684 A.D. when Abdul Ghafur lost one of his ships and accused the English factors of complicity.[69]

The merchants of Surat also engaged in maritime trade with Bengal. Mulla Abdul Ghafur's ship the *Queda* merchant was taken by *Kidd* while on a voyage from Bengal to Surat. It had a cargo worth £ 30,000 a considerable portion belonging to *Mukhlis Khan*, an important nobleman of the Mughal court.[70]

On September 23rd, 1701 A.D. news reached Surat that Abdul Ghafur's ship the *Hussaini* had been plundered by pirates of Daman, and the Dutch cruisers escorting the Red sea fleet, the *Hussaini* was one of them, had done nothing.[71]

Dutch detained Abdul Ghafur's ship *Fez Resan* at *Malacca* in 1703 A.D. and inventoried its cargo. Besides merchants and superior officers, 24 men described as common sailors were carrying a small quantity of goods each. The main item was copper of which almost every one of them had taken one or two chests. Mostly they carried nothing else.[72]

One can observe the importance and influence of Ghafur over the local administration. The governor of Surat ordered the 'Shahbandar' (chief custom officer) and some eminent merchant to go to Swally to treat the chief of three nations. Before effect, however, could be given to this order, various difficulties had to be overcome. First of all meetings between the three heads of factories had to be abandoned, because of the question of precedence. Englishmen tried to arrange a meeting at the English house, but official letter insisted on its being held at the French house. For this purpose the eminent merchants were selected, Abdul Ghafur, was favored by the governor as a negotiator.[73]

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[67] Mocha report is annual coverage written by the Dutch factors at Mocha.

[68] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 70.

[69] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 94.

[70] *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries*, p. 119.

[71] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 101.

[72] Ibid, p. 42.

[73] *EFI*, 1670-77, p. 211.

There is divergence of opinion among historians about the relations of Abdul Ghafur and Mughal officials. Van Leur calls him a political animal, but Ashin Das gives credence to his economic worth and observes that he was primarily a merchant and he aimed throughout at wealth rather than power. One can safely conclude that he was basically a merchant and his fabulous wealth was entirely his own creation, but he used his money to mould official matters related to him. It seems to some extent he tried to interfere in political or official matters. Ghafur knew the politics of the Mughal Empire and could, if he wished, be a superb operator in the politics of the city.[74]

Ghafur had a brother called Mulla Abdul Wahab who was also among the richest merchants of Surat He had a son and a daughter, and his daughter was married to the son of Abdul Ghafur. The son of Wahab, whose name cannot be traced, was a great favourite of the Mirza Mohammad, who had been the *harkara* at Surat for twelve years and it would seems that Abdul Ghafur objected to the influence he had over the son of Wahab. It was this tension which came to a head in the incident of 30 March 1703 A.D. At this time when Abdul Wahab became fatally ill. Ghafur produced a will at *darbar* singed by Wahab, indicating that his son is a bastard and he will to let all his property to the daughter who was married to Ghafur's son. According to Raksikadas,[75] Wahab had done this under strong pressure from Ghafur.[76]

Mulla Ghafur died in 1718 A.D., at the age of ninety six. He had no issue and so Haider Quli Khan confiscated his wealth and wares estimated at 85 lacs of rupees. A report of it was submitted to the Royal court. Mulla Abdul Hai, the son of Ghafur went to the court of justice and proved his claim as the adopted son of the deceased. His majesty treated him with kindness, favoured him with a precious robe and a present of an elephant, conferred upon him the title of "*Umdat-ul-Tujjar*" and gave him a royal order to return his parental property without any molestation.[77]

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[74] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, pp. 12, 13.

[75] Raksikdas was an employee of Dutch, who was present at *darbar* and narrated every event related to *darbar* to the Dutch later on.

[76] Ibid., p. 119.

[77] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 370; Also see *Sunni Vahora*, p. 27; *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, pp. 197,198,199; Gupta, Ashin Das, 'The Merchants of Surat', *Elites in South Asia*, Eds. Leach and Mukherjee, Cambridge, 1970, p. 208-209.

Some other examples are also there to understand the relations between Mughals and Bohra merchants, at the time of coronation (*takht nashini*) of Aurangzeb Alamgir, *qazi* of Ahmadabad was – Shahjahan Hayat, who denied (*inkar*) to recite *khutba*. At this moment Sheikh Abdul Wahab, who was a Bohra and grandson of Maulana Mohammad Tahir of Patani, defeated *qazi* of Ahmadabad in a religious debate. After that *qazi* agreed to recite *khutba* and other formalities of coronation were completed.[78]

Aurangzeb gave an amount of Rs. 2000/- on the request of Sheikh Abdul Wahab for the construction the water body termed as *Adaljani Bav*. Later Abdul Wahab became *qazi* and Emperor Aurangzeb appointed him as '*Shaikh-ul-Islam*'.[79] In 1684 A.D., there was a great famine (*dukaal*) in Ahmadabad and prices of grain soared high. Aurangzeb remitted taxes for one year, in compliance of the patron of *Sheikh-ul-Islam* Sheikh Abdul Wahab.[80]

Thus by a sample study of the three prominent merchants Shantidas, Virji Vohra and Mulla Ghafur, we can conclude merchant communities in Gujarat had maintained cordiality with the Mughal court. Whenever important merchants like Mulla Ghafur, Shantidas and Virji Vohra wished for any help from the Emperors and local administrators they did not hesitate to seek favours. But these relations were mutually maintained from both the sides. Whenever Emperor, members of royal family and other officers needed financial assistance, these merchants catered to their demands, and when merchants had any issue and discomfort with local officials and administration, they had positive response from the Emperor.

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[78] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 36.

[79] Ibid., p. 36.

[80] Ibid.

Chapter-6

Idea of Money for Different Communities

An idea can be explained as a thought, a philosophy, a notion, a principal and a concept. Money has always been a medium of exchange for goods and services, whether we talk about sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It has always played an important role in the life of human beings. Money is used as a parameter of values of goods and services on the market, and it is also a determinant of social status.

This chapter intends to outline the idea of money to the merchant community and to serve this purpose the prominent merchant communities like Bohras, Banias, Parsis and Chalebis have been sampled. The intention is to assess the manner in which these merchant communities invested their capital and transformed their money in terms of luxury or productive source. How and in what manner they invested and accrued benefit of their massive wealth? What were the arenas which attracted their attention to make us estimate their various notion of money.

In sixteenth-seventeenth century, Gujarat was the main centre for trade and commerce and industry. Many merchants came here for business purport and settled down in this region. There were many merchant communities who were involved in different business, and earned a huge profit and lived a luxurious life.

M.S. Commissariat opines that the people of Gujarat must have enjoyed, on the whole, a satisfactory degree of material prosperity during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Their idea of money triggered a passion for strong position in society, and maintenance of a high social status. The big merchants of different communities enjoyed a social dominance in their own community. They became representative of their community in social, religious, legal or administrative context. They also acted as communication between administrative officers and their community. The prominent merchants developed good contacts with the administrative authorities. Money played such a vital role in merchant's life. They used their money to reap more benefit which would complement powerful position.

Bohras:

The Bohra notion of money can be comprehended as investment in Shipbuilding industry and revel in luxuries of life like maintenance of Gardens, island and fort. The matter reached its apex in the time of his grandson, Mohammad Ali.

Indian shipping flourished despite European violence. India experienced expansion of shipping in the second half of eighteenth century. As early as 1644 A.D. the

numerical strength of the ships increased to considerable extent.[1] For the Europeans tonnage was in terms of space while for the Indians it was for weight. M.N. Pearson mentions that during early 16th century Muslims owned heavy ships of 375 - 800 tons capacity.[2] There are variations among scholars estimate for the number of ships Mulla Abdul Ghafur owned. According to Manucci and Hamilton he had 20 ships. Bardolikar says he had 19 ships. Ashin Das and Pearson estimated 17 ships after the raids of Shivaji. B.G. Gokhale says that his family owned around 34 ships. In short one can acknowledge that Mulla Ghafur owned at least 17 to 34 ships. He also had a wharf[3] for his shipping to the south.[4]

It is difficult to estimate worthiness or durability of Indian ships. A.J. Qaiser has observed three Indian ships which were mentioned in two or three different time period in various sources, and on the basis of this time-interval, he is able to get some idea of durability or life-period of the Indian ships.[5] These ships were:

1. *Jahaz-i-Ilahi* - 27 Yrs.
2. *Salamati* - 42 Yrs.
3. *Ganjawar* - 41 Yrs.

The first reference to the *jahaz-i-Ilahi* is in the 21st R.Y. of Akbar[6] and the last is in the 38th R.Y.[7] *Salamati* was 450 tons and first noticed in 1612 A.D., next in 1622 A.D. and lastly in 1644 A.D.[8] *Ganjawar* was first mentioned in 1619 A.D.[9] and then in 1650 A.D.[10]

Ghafur used his financial resources as a means to make his position secure, and this became clearer at the decline of Mughal Empire, the raids by Shivaji affected Surat

[1] *EFI*, 1642-45, p.142.

[2] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 8.

[3] Wharf is the quayside area to which a ship may be moored to load and unload.

[4] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 127.

[5] Qaiser, A.J., 'Shipbuilding in Mughal Empire During the 17th century', I.E.S.H.R., vol. 5, 1968, pp. 164-165.

[6] *Akbarnama*, III, p. 195; Also see *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, II, p. 181.

[7] *Akbarnama*, III, p. 638.

[8] *EFI*, 1642-45, p. 161.

[9] Ibid., 1618-21, p. 113.

[10] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 324.

adversely. However the Gujaratis continued to build more ships and in these years, for the first time, they sent their vessels, admittedly only a few, to Canton and Manila. The fleet numbered well over a hundred sea going vessels of which the Mughal normally had two at sea while Ghafur controlled seventeen.[11]

Abdul Ghafur owned a large house at *saudagarpura* in Surat, and a big garden in the northern suburbs of the city (where Delawar Khan, a newly appointed Governor of Surat, spent a few days before entering the city), He was the owner of huge property. He also had good relations with the administrative officers of the city. Delawar Khan, newly appointed governor of Surat who could stay anywhere in the city, preferred to spend a few days in Ghafur's garden.

The maintenance of garden was an expensive affair in the sense that it involved procurement of seeds of flowers and fruits as well employing man power for its sustenance .Since they were pleasure gardens, expenditure was incurred over masonry work and its embellishment. Irrigational facilities were also arranged to match the seasonal changes.

The tradition of gardens has always been there in India, but systematic arrangement of gardens was started with arrival of Mughals in India.[12] Gujarat also had a tradition of gardens since earlier times. After the invasion of this region by Mughals a mixed culture in gardens existed.[13] Mandelslo witnessed 15 gardens in the area of Cambay.[14] Hamilton talks about the city of Surat "the rich men of the town built many summer houses in the field and planted gardens to solace themselves and families in the pretty violent heats of April, May and June."[15] Ashin Das Gupta also mentions some gardens owned and maintained by some wealthy merchants in Surat.[16]

It is said that Ghafur had probably made his fortune in the Red Sea trade and owned one of the largest mansion in the town of Mocha. His *nakhudas* (ship commanders) would stay in his house during the season and sometimes for a whole year to supervise

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[11] *India and Indian Ocean 1500-1800 A.D.*, p. 135.

[12] Villiers, C.M., *Gardens of the Great Moughals*, London, 1913, p. 67; Ansari, Mohd. Azher, 'Palaces and Gardens of the Mughals, *Islamic Culture*, Vol. 33, 1959, p. 51.

[13] Fatma, Sadaf, 'Gardens in Mughal Gujarat", P.I.H.C., 72nd session, Patiala, 2012, p. 441.

[14] Mandelslo, p. 42.

[15] *A New Account of the East Indies (1688-1723)*, I, p. 145.

[16] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, pp. 32-33.

the sale of his merchandise. He was an honoured man at Mocha and enjoyed special exemptions from custom at the port.[17]

On the other hand, Mulla Mohammad Ali, the grandson of Ghafur, was also a big name in Surat.

"મુલ્લા મુહંમદ અલીનો સુરતમાં સિક્કો બજતો હતો."[18]

He was involved in local politics as well, and he interfered in the local politics.

"સુરતના રાજકાજમાં માટે ઉખાડ પછાડ મચાવતા રહ્યા હતા."[19]

He maintained a troop of about three thousand soldiers.

"મુહંમદ અલી પાસે ત્રણેક હજાર સીપહીઓનું એક બાંગી લશ્કર હતું."[20]

He lived like a prince.[21] He invested money on luxuries and just for the sake of pomp and show and to satisfy his ambitious desires. Mohammad Ali gave up his ancestral ways due to abundance of wealth and he devoted considerable time to build an island on sea coast near the port of Gogha. He built a luxurious fort, turrets and citadel as well. He spent a large sum on it. He induced people of different places to build houses and reside there. Many people collected together to settle there. But the island was full of snakes, that is why many people died of snake-bite and rest escaped. The idea to build an island failed, and then he moved his focus to village *Athawa* in Surat near the bank of river Tapi, where he laid a foundation of a fort,[22] with the help of port officer Bahram Khan. Mohammad Ali spent around Rs. 80,000/- for managing to obtain a sole *sanad* for him. He built strong fortifications. Several *bazars* sprang up on the road. Merchants

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[17] 'Gujarati Merchants and the Red Sea Trade', p.124.

[18] *Vahora Vibhutiyo*, op. cit., p. 18.

[19] Ibid., p.18.

[20] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 495-496; Also see *Vahora Vibutiyo*, p.18.

[21] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 457, 462, 495, 500.

[22] Ibid., p. 457.

and others resided there. Mohammad Ali also decided to unload his imported goods there.[23] This was the zenith of ambitions of Mulla Mohammad Ali.

The above instances show that Mohammad Ali was more inclined towards a life of Prince rather a merchant. His grandfather Abdul Ghafur earned a huge property but he never tried to have a troop or fort, he lived a simple life. However he had an influential personality and desired to earn more and more money. The reason behind his simplicity was his religious nature. He was associated with a mosque in the earlier phase of his life and had gone for *Haj*. So he did not believe in luxurious life. But Mohammad Ali had a different outlook towards life.

Sheikh Hamid who was a merchant as well as a scholar, maintained a rich library in Surat.[24] Sheikh Mohammad Fazil also a great scholar, who collected thousands of rare manuscripts various countries and spent Rs. 30,00,000 for it.[25]

Interestingly enough Bohras believed in donation and charity. In 1751 A.D. Abdur Rehman, son of Mohmmad bin Abdur Rehman a Sunni Bohra who had a mango grove (*Ambawadi*) outside the *Variavi* gate[26] in Surat and which he donated and made a trust for the maintenance of a graveyard (*Qabristan*) and appointed Sheikh Ahmad a trustee (*mutavalli*) of it.[27] Bardolikar observes that Sunni Bohras' main characteristics were bravery and religious beliefs.

They were active in public welfare since very early times. They were always busy in the construction of mosques, *Madarsas*, schools, hospitals, *sarais*/Inn, *Vachnalayas* / debate cells and libraries etc, Scholarships for poor students were common.[28]

Chalebis:

Among the Chalebis the house of Ahmad Chalebi's was the second most beautiful and big among the merchants' houses of Surat.[29] Ahmad Chalebi also had a beautiful garden.[30]

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[23] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 462.

[24] *Surat Sonani Murat*, p. 61; Also see *Sunni Vahora*, p. 26.

[25] *Sunni Vahora*, pp. 26-27.

[26] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 2.

[27] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 42.

[28] Ibid., p. 10.

[29] 'The Chalebi Merchants at Surat, 16^{th}-18^{th} centuries', p. 410.

[30] *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, p. 32.

According to *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, Chalebis were also involved in shipbuilding business. Some of the Chalebi merchants owned many ships. Taahar Chalebi had 9 ships, Ahmad Chalebi had 7 ships and Saleh Chalebi was the owner of 5 ships.[31] Noman Bin Hussain Chalebi had a ship named *Ganjawar*, and another member of his family- Usman Chalebi had many ships.[32]

Banias:

Among the Banias, Shantidas, who was the court jeweler and the financer during the time of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. He presented some gifts to Shahjahan at the time of his accession to the throne.[33] He was allowed to enter Mughal *harem*, which was a social privilege. According to Maganlal Vakhatchand - the royal ladies considered him as their brother[34] and Shah Jahan addressed him as *mama* or maternal uncle.[35] It shows that how much he enjoyed privileged position in the Mughal Court and he enjoyed this influence because of his mercantile talent and wealth.

Shantidas also spent a big amount for religious purposes. He constructed a famous Jain Temple of Parswanath in Ahmadabad,[36] and he was also involved in other religious activities. He used a big amount of his earnings on religions purposes which made him the leader or representative of his community. He secured a strong position in the Mughal court and as well as in the Jain community.

Another merchant of Surat, Virji Vora was also famous for his wealth who developed shipping insurance business along with another big name- Bhimji Parekh.[37] Virji was the head of the *Mahajans*, and in this role he acted as the ultimate authority within this group. He was very influential and sometimes called by officials to give advice to them on commercial matters.[38]

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[31] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 39.

[32] *Sunni Vahora*, p. 28.

[33] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 207.

[34] *Amadabadno Itihas*, pp. 25-27.

[35] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, 1912, pp. 5-6.

[36] *A History of Gujarat*, II, p. 127; Also see 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', pp. 12, 15; Mandelslo, p. 23-24, 101-102; Thevenot, pp. 13-14; *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, I, pp. 8-9.

[37] *History of International Trade and Customs Duties in Gujarat*, op. cit., p. 98.

[38] *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective*, p. 125-126.

Virji Vohra furnished money to Mughal princes in their need. We do not have any evidence that he ever attempted to have powerful and influential position on the basis of his money. But it is true that he was called 'merchant prince' by many historians.

One can estimate Shantidas Zaveri's wealth big amount of Rs. 5,50,000/- to Prince Murad Baksh, at the eve of war of succession by his brother.[39]

Makarand Mehta says that 'Virji Vohra was the first person who made coffee so popular in the region of Gujarat and often places of India.'[40]

Banias as a community had a different outlook towards money. B.L. Bhadani observes in his paper entitled 'Characteristics and Social Mores of the Banias', that "the Banias' favourite idea for saving money was ornaments of gold and silver. This seems to have served two purposes first, for the women of social status; and second, these ornaments insured them in times of emergency."[41]

Ovington says that when he visited Ahmadabad he found that Banias of the city loved to use plates of solid gold for serving different dishes to their guests at the time of any public festival or in times of jubilee,[42] which indicates that it was display their wealth and status among other fellows of their community.

Sometimes the people of this community had some secret money, which was not even in the knowledge of their family members, as the author of *Ardhakathanak,* Banarsidas mentioned that when his father Kharagsen came back to Jaunpur from Patna, he arranged a marriage for his eldest daughter and to bear all the expenses of marriage he used his secret money which he had kept underground earlier.[43] It was unique feature of Banias that they used to have some secret money for their emergency and tough times.

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[39] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, p. 211; Also see 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', p. 13; *Studies in the History of Gujarat*, Ahmadabad, 1987, p. 16; *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 127.

[40] *Gujaratna Ghadvaiya*, p. 183.

[41] Bhadani, B. L., 'Characteristics and social mores of Banias', *Art and Culture*, Eds. Ahsan Jan Qaisar and S.P. Verma, Jaipur, 1993, p. 51.

[42] Ovington, pp. 187-188.

[43] *Ardhakathanak*, p. 33.

Parsis:

Parsis were agriculturists in the initial phases in India, but later on they grew even more ambitious. They started trade with China and Burma in 18th century.[44]

Famous Parsi merchant Rustam Manekji of late 17th century, owned a beautiful garden in Surat called *Rusatam Bagh.*[45] The area where this garden was situated called *Rustam Pura* after his name:

"રૂસ્તમ બાગ એણે બંધાવ્યો છે અને શહેરમાં જે પરાંનું નામ રૂસ્તમપરૂ પડયું છે તે તેનાં ઉપરથી."[46]

A Parsi, Banaji Limji, went to Bombay from Surat in 1690 A.D. and grew prosperous.[47] In later period Parsis developed cotton trade, they exported raw cotton in large quantities and then they became owners of cotton mills.[48]

Jamshedji Jejeebhoy founded a 'Jejeebhoy translation found' for translating the classics of Asia and Europe into Gujarati.[49]

Ovington says about the Parsi community that "they have a universal kindness either in employing someone needy and able to work or in the matter of charity. We never find any beggar in their tribes and they believed in enjoying community life.[50]

Jejeebhoy also built fire temples (*Agyaris*) and towers of silence as well as bungalows for holding Parsi religious festivals.[51] Two *Agyaries* (in Surat, one at *Machhli Peeth* and other was at *Rustam Pura*) and a *Dharmashala* was constructed by Fardunji Parekh of Bombay.[52] In 1698 A.D., Rustam Manekji built a well in Surat for the religious purpose.[53]

However Malabari says about them, "They cannot understand patriotism, and though charity is the very basis of their, they are utter strangers to that greatest of divine

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[44] *History of the Parsis*, II, op. cit., p. 87.

[45] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 7.

[46] Ibid.

[47] *History of the Parsis*, II, op. cit., p. 87.

[48] Ibid.

[49] *The Parsis*, p. 88.

[50] Ovington, p. 218.

[51] *The Parsis*, p. 88.

[52] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 7.

[53] Ibid.

graces. Their notions of charity is the giving away of alms, the distribution of money. Their own and anybody else's to the deserving on undeserving, with some objects, often that of earning popularity or official favoures."[54]

So the mentality and idea behind the money was different from persons to person and from community to community. The main reason was to use the hard earned money, to obtain power, and to make useful strong contacts. All the merchants of different communities tried to multiply their wealth by different means.

But the merchants not only used money for their own profits and interests. They also spent on charity and social service. In the accounts of European travellers, there are several references of vetenary hospitals for animals in almost all the main towns of Gujarat, which were run by money raised by merchants.[55]

We can conclude our discussion by acknowledging that the merchant community was by no means miserly people instead they made lavish investments in industries like shipbuilding, obtaining political privileges and social elevation by luxurious lifestyle.

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[54] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, p. 134.

[55] Pietro Della Valle, I, p. 70; Also see Fitch, p. 14; Thevenot, p. 18; Tavernier, I, pp. 77-78.

Money Assets of Merchants

Money Investment	Bohras	Chalebis	Banias	Parsis
1. **Ships**	Mulla Abdul Ghafur (around 17-34 ships) (Ghafur had control over ¼ of entire shipping)	Taahar Chalebi (9 ships) Ahmad Chalebi (7 ships) Saleh Chalebi (5 ships) Noman Bin Hussain Chalebi Usman chalebi	Benidas: (Sea Flower and Diamond)	-
2. **Gardens**	Mulla Abdul Ghafur Abdur Rehman (mango grove)	Ahmad Chalebi	-	Rustam Manekji
3. **Wharf**	Mulla Abdul Ghafur	-	-	-
4. **Fort**	Mulla Mohammad Ali	-	-	-
5. **Troop**	Mulla Mohammad Ali	-	-	-
6. **Island**	Mulla Mohammad Ali	-	-	-
7. **Libraries**	Sheikh Hamid Sheikh Mohammad Fazil	-	-	-
8. **Charity**	Abdur Rehman	-	-	-
9. **Money Lending**	-	-	Shantidas Zaveri Virji Vora Manekchand Bhimji Parekh	Rustamji
10. **Religious Buildings**	Mulla Mohammad Ali	-	Shantidas Zaveri	Jamshedji Jejeebhoy Fardunji Parekh Rustam Manekji
11. **Shipping Insurance**	-	-	Vitji Vora Bhimji Parekh	-
12. **Coffee Trade**	-	-	Virji Vora	-
13. **Cotton Trade**	-	-	-	Banaji Limji
14. **Translation fund**	-	-	-	Jamshedji Jejeebhoy

Chapter -7

Different Institutions of Merchant Communities

Interestingly enough the merchants in India formed an organizations or commercial institutions in order to systematically conduct their commercial activities, maintained discipline among the groups, sorted problems and to avoid competitions between fellow merchants.

The present chapter entails an investigation of the institutions which can be understood as guilds, *mahajans*, *sheth*, *nagarsheth*, *sarrafs* and brokers, which were vital for smooth conduct of trade and commercial transactions operated in the thriving *subah* of Gujarat.

Guilds:

Guilds were organizations operational in India ever since ancient times. Guilds could be organizations of artisans and craftsmen as also of mercantile groups. Indian heritage has examples of guilds both in south and north of India. The terminology applied was *Sreni*, *Nagaram* and *Sangha* etc.

The guilds served the purpose of regulating business and ensuring the interests of the traders. It was meant to resolve problems related to business.

The guilds were created to avoid the competition among the merchants. In the period business was organized under *shrenis*. Around eighteen guilds have been listed according to Buddhist literature between 6th century B.C. and 11th century A.D.[1]

Major Guilds[2] (6th – 11th c.)

1. Sauwarnik/Hiranyaka *(goldsmith)*	***2. Pravarik*** *(clothe merchant)*	***3. Mani-Prastaraka*** *(gem merchant)*
4. Gandhik *(perfume seller)*	***5. Tailik*** *(oil seller)*	***6. Ghrit-Kundik*** *(dairy product seller)*
7. Gaulik	***8. Dandik***	***9. Karparik***
10. Khand-Karak *(sugar merchant)*	***11. Modak-Karak*** *(sweets seller)*	***12. Samit-Karak***

[1] Chopra, P.N., B.N. Puri and M.N. Das, *Bharat ka Samajik,Sanskritik Aur Aarthik Itihas*, 3 Vols., I, New Delhi, 1975 (reprint-2001), p. 133.

[2] *Bharat ka Samajik,Sanskritik Aur Aarthik Itihas*, I, op. cit., p. 133.

13. Saktu-Karak	*14. Phal-Vanij (fruits merchant)*	*15. Mool-Vanij (green grocer)*
16. Att-Vanij (flour seller)	*17. Choorya-Kuttak (founded grounded product merchant)*	*18. Gandh-Tailik (perfumed oil seller)*

There appears to be certain classification of the guilds. This classification was based on specialized profession. Every guild had a head *jetthak*, who controled over other members of *shreni.*[3] These guilds were also conducted the business of money-lending.[4] These guilds had a legal authorization. Every member of the guild had to follow the orders of the head. The head was responsible for his particular guild.[5] Guilds also worked as trustees of religious places. They played an important role of bankers.[6]

Al Beruni (11th century) describes eight *shrenis* in his account. They were organized socially and economically, and were termed *Antyaja.*[7] In the later centuries Banias showed much class consciousness. In all the main centres of trade, some of the leading Bania capitalists operated under the name of *mahajan*, for a merchant guild.[8]

The guild fixed the rate of exchange and discount, and levies free on certain transaction, spending the proceeds on human and religious objects.[9] This organization played an important role in economic and social life of the country at different points of time. The *shreshthin / jetthak* or head of the guild was neither appointed by a superior authority nor was he elected.[10] It was difficult to ascertain how *jetthak* was appointed.

[3] *Bharat ka Samajik, Sanskritik Aur Aarthik Itihas*, I, p. 133.

[4] Ibid., p. 123.

[5] Ibid., p. 133.

[6] Ibid., p. 134.

[7] Ahmad, Qayamuddin, *Bharat : Al Beruni* (translation of *Kitab-ul-Hind*), Tr. Noor Nabi Abbasi, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 2004, p. 41; *Bharat ka Samajik,Sanskritik Aur Aarthik Itihas*, p. 134.

[8] *Hindu Caste and Tribes of Gujarat,* I, p. 95.

[9] Ibid..

[10] Tripathi, D. & Mehta M., 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad: The History of an Urban Institution in a Gujarat City', P.I.H.C., Vol. 1, 39th session, 1978, p. 481.

Among the Parsis there was a group of five to twelve Parsi *sheths*, which was called a *Panchayat*.[11] This was a sort of guild, an arbitration court and a highly respectable body. The *Panchayat's* head (*sheth*) was often an old man.[12] The guilds in Gujarat continued and flourished till as late as 19th century.[13] A *khatpatra*[14] / sale dead of 1627 A.D. (No. 91) clearly indicates that this institution was operative.

Mahajan:

The tradition of *mahajan* came with the filtration of merchants into the Ahmadabad from other places of Gujarat. They brought with them the tradition of *mahajan*. This institution took its firm root in Ahmadabad at a very early stage.[15] In acknowledging this institution Pearson observes in his *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* that "there were un-official monetary connections between merchants and rulers. Politically, the institutionalized link, when needed, was provided by the *mahajans*."[16] A *farman* of 1644 A.D. also endorses this observation.[17]

Pearson highlights interesting discussions of this institution when he remarks 'mahajan means different things in different parts of India'.[18] It could be an individual banker, a money-lender, a merchant, or an unspecified "great man".[19] The *mahajan* was concerned with the commercial matters, such as prices, adjudicating disputes within the occupational group, and representing members in disputes with other *mahajans*.[20]

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[11] *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, p. 135.

[12] Ibid., pp. 135-136.

[13] 'The Nagarsheths of Ahmadabad', op. cit., p. 481.

[14] Preserved in B.J. Institute, Ahmadabad.

[15] Shastri, Hariprasad, 'Vidyasabha Sangrahalayana Marathakalin Khatpatra', *Budhhi Prakash*, July, 1978, p. 482.

[16] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 123.

[17] 'Imperial Mughal *Farmans* in Gujarat', pp. 36-47.

[18] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 123.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

In Gujarat, it usually meant a group which represented people engaged in the same commercial occupation, a governing council with an elected or occasionally hereditary headman.[21]

The *mahajan* catered to higher economic strata, such as merchants of various types and bankers. Such *mahajans* existed only in the big towns of Gujarat.[22] This body of *mahajans* regulated general commercial activities in the town. Such activities included making of rates of exchange and discount, and observation of financial holidays.[23]

M. J. Mehta props interesting information in his paper 'Indigenous Paper Industry and Muslim Entrepreneurship'. Here he explains that the paper industry of Ahmadabad was mostly patronized by Muslims whose *mahajan* was known as *kagdi ni jamaat.*[24] Ahmadabad was the main centre of textile trade.

The *mahajans* of textile merchants were divided according to the varieties of clothes. Thus there were separate *mahajans* of merchants specializing in cotton, silk, handloom and brocade etc. The cloth *mahajan* dominated the city.[25] The *sahukar*, banker or *sarraf mahajan* was second in hierarchy. There were printers' *mahajan*, *mahajans* of grain dealers.[26]

The *mahajans* were heterogeneous in character. Each *mahajan* represented more than two castes or communities.[27] Ahmadabad cloth mahajans were Jains, *Vaisnava* Banias and *Meshri* Brahmana.[28]

Virji Vora the great Jain merchant of 16th century. He was the head of *mahajans* in Surat and also a religious leader. Another Jain merchant of Ahmadabad, Shantidas was addressed as *Nagarsheth* of the city-wide *mahajan.*[29]

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[21] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 123.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., pp. 123-124.

[24] *Kagdi ni jamaat* Cf. Mehta, Shirin, 'The Mahajans and Business Communities of Ahmadabad', *Business Communities in India.* op. cit., p. 180.

[25] 'The Mahajans and Business Communities of Ahmadabad', op. cit., p. 180.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 125.

There is an interesting instance indicating the influential role of *mahajans*. In 1669 A.D., when there was a dispute between Bania merchants and the *Qazi* of Surat on the matter of conversion of some Banias into Islam. The Banias of Suart decided to leave Surat in accordance with the decision of their *mahajans*.[30]



Mahajans of Ahmadabad
(Late 18th and early 19th century)
(Source: '*Ahmadabad Next: Towards A World Heritage City*',
Times Group Books, Times of India, New Delhi, 2010, p. 41.)

This institution was important, because it had vast responsibilities and works. On one hand, it could take decisions on financial matters and on the other hand, it worked as leader

[30] 'Mehta R.N., 'Urban Surat: An Archeological, Topographical and Toponymical Perspective', Eds. A.G. Javadekar, J.M.S.U.B., Vol. XXII & XXIII (combined issue), Baroda, pp. 18-24; Also see Sushil Cahudhary, 'The Gujarati Mahajans: An Analysis of Their Functional role in Surat Crisis of 1669', P.I.H.C., 1980, p. 357.

for the community. They were involved in the business of money-lending, and had the authority to affect the prices of market as well.

Nagarsheth:

The position of *nagarsheth* gradually evolved in Ahmadabad in 17th century.[31] Maganlal Vakhatchand, the author of *Amdavadno Itihas* (history of Ahmadabad) gives a story of the origin of the position to an imperial order, according to it Mughal Emperor Jahangir had given this title of *nagarsheth* to Shantidas Zaveri.[32] Shantidas who was a Jain merchant and the son of an immigrant merchant from Marwar in Rajasthan,[33] earned a huge money and won confidence of Mughals, even he was allowed to enter the *harem* (chamber of royal women) and *zanankhana* (chamber of ladies), and royal ladies used to call him as their brother.[34] One does not find any evidence regarding the title of *nagarsheth* enjoyed , except the story given by Vakhatchand.

As Dwijendra Tripathi and M.J. Mehta observe in their article 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad : The History of An Urban Institution in a Gujarat City' that "it is noteworthy that none of the *khatpatras* pertaining to the year before 1660 A.D. makes reference to any *nagarsheth*, though several of the subsequent years do so."[35]

Nagarasheth was not a part of the Mughal bureaucracy. All the *mahajans* were independent of each other and were conducting trade in their respective areas. There was no formal link between one another and no formal authority was there to represent for the entire business community as a whole, up to the mid 17th century.[36]

Again Tripathi and Mehta observe that "Shantidas has never been mentioned as a *nagarsheth* in any of the contemporary documents, and this title was not prefixed with his name in *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, which never refers to Khushalchand (Shantidas's son) without the

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[31] 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad', p. 483.

[32] *Amadabadno Itihas*, pp. 125-127.

[33] *Jain Aitihasik Rasmala*, p. 1; Also see *Amadabadno Itihas*, pp. 125-127.

[34] *Amadabadno Itihas*, pp. 125-127.

[35] 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad', pp. 483-484.

[36] Ibid., p. 484.

title."[37] Khushalchand had established an undisputed claim to the *nagarsheth*, not only for himself, but also for his descendents. This clearly indicates that none in the long line of such *nagarsheths* belonged to any other family. The development of this position was a peculiarity in urban institution.[38]

Being a principal merchant and the head of his own guild, the *nagarsheth* became an informal link between the city and the state.[39] Besides being a link, *nagarsheth* performed several other roles. He used his influence to settle down disputes between various guilds and individuals, helped the state authorities to raise funds in the city, and played a role in collecting the town cess. As Tripathi and Mehta opine "the *nagarsheth* was a sort of father-figure to the city."[40]

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[37] 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad', p. 483; Also see *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 446-447, 505, 516-518, 551, 621, 627, 708.

[38] 'The Nagarsheth of Ahmadabad', p. 489.

[39] Ibid., p. 490.

[40] Ibid., p. 491.

Traders' organisations, roughly comparable to trade guilds of medieval Europe, existed in India at least from the 6th century BC up to the end of the 13th century AD. Variously known as *shrenis*, *sanghas*, *pugas*, *naigamas* and mahajans in different parts of the country at different points of time, these organisations played a crucial role in the economic and social life of the country.

Gujarat being the gateway of India to the western world, its cities had become prominent centres of trade and commerce, and wealth and prosperity of its merchants had elevated them into powerful pressure groups.

Their associations, known as mahajans, each headed by a *sheth*, continued to be an integral part of the socio-economic fabric of Gujarat.

Ahmedabad gained the most from this tradition. Though it started as an administrative and military headquarter of the province, by the end of the 16th century, the city had become a great manufacturing and commercial centre.

By the end of the 16th century, it had become one of the largest and the most populous which attracted merchants from surrounding areas and gave birth to the mahajan tradition.

By the time the British arrived, Ahmedabad had become an important trade centre in the country. The mahajans (guilds formed by businessmen to regulate business as state intervention was minimum) had become an integral part of the city culture.

At the start of the 18th century, there were 52 mahajans – cloth, gold, precious metals etc – which were mostly professional groups and not caste-driven panels.

('Ahmadabad Next: Towards A World Heritage City', Times Group Books, Times of India, New Delhi, 2010, p. 41.)

Family-tree of Shantidas Zaveri

(Jain Aitihasik Rasmala)

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શ્રેષ્ઠીવર્ય શાન્તિદાસજીનો વંશવૃક્ષ.

ક્ષત્રીય બીજ

સીસોદીયા રજપુત — શાખા ઝઝોળા

(સામંત સંગ્રામસિંહ અને કુમારપાળ
સીસોદીયાનો વંશ.)

—મેવાડના રાજાના ઠેઠ નજીકના સગા સબંધી—

મુખ્ય—

પદમશાહ.*

વત્સાશેઠ.

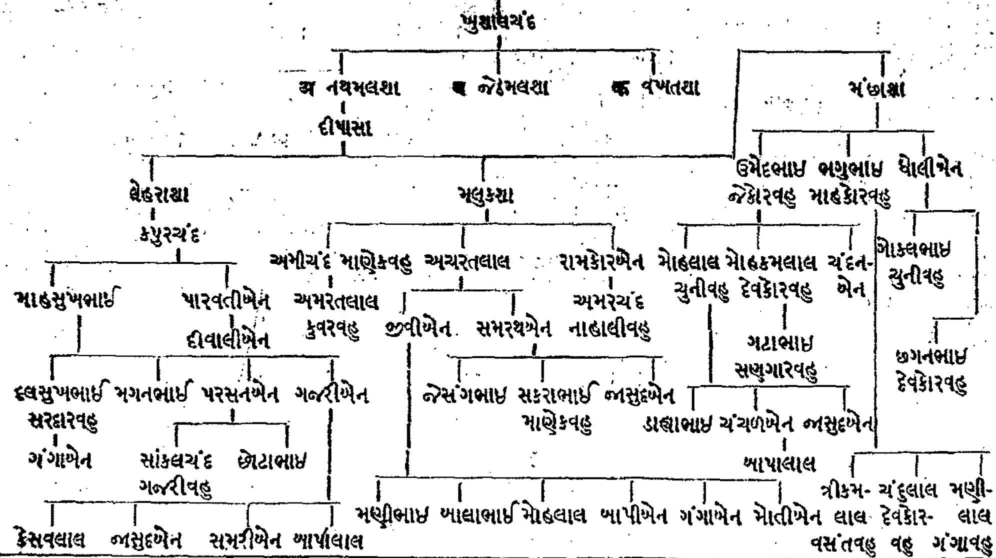
સેસકરણ (સહસ્રકિરણ.)

શાંતીદાસશેઠ (ચારીત્ર નાયક).

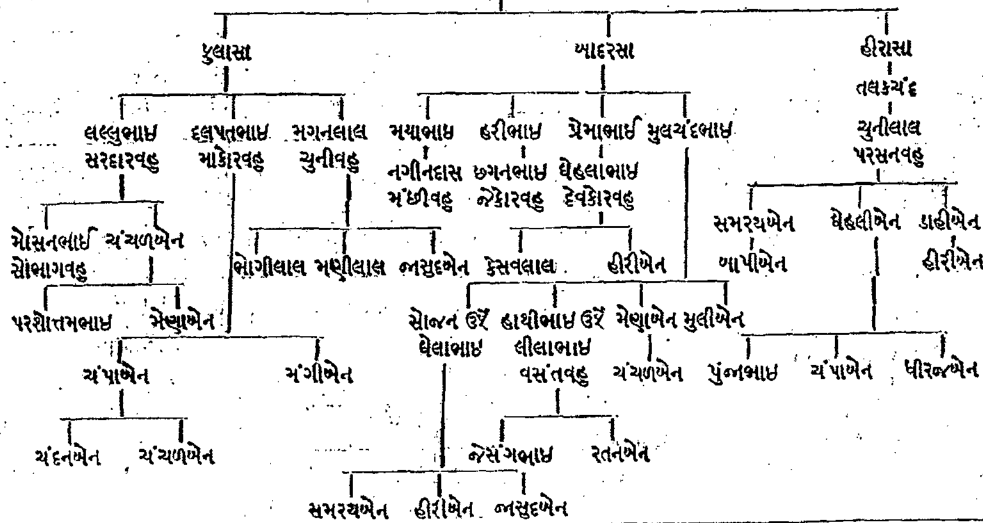
(૧)	(૨)	(૩)	(૪)	(૫)
પનજી.	રતનજી.	લખમીચંદ.	માણેકચંદ.	હેમચંદ.

નોટ—પાંચમાભાઇનો વંશવેલો નથી. ચાર ભાઇનો વંશવેલો (૧) (૨) (૩) (૪) ના આંક મુજબ ફાળીફુલી વૃદ્ધિંગત થયેલ અત્યાર સુધી કીર્તિવંત સ્થિતિએ હયાત છે.

* એક વંશાવલીમાં પદમશાહને સ્થાને હરપાળ છે પણ તપાસતાં પદમશાહ બરોબર જણાયું છે.



સુચના—આ પાનામાં શેઠ **શાંતિદાસના** દિકરા લખમીચંદનો વંશવેલો છે. તેમાં દીપાસાના ત્રણ દિકરાના વંશવેલાનો સમાવેશ છે; બાકીના ત્રણ દિકરાનો પાંચમા પાનામાં સમાવેશ કરવામાં આવ્યો છે. જેઠમલના વંશ માટે જુઓ પૃષ્ટ ૫૪ નીશાની **ख**. વખતશાના વંશ માટે જુઓ પૃષ્ટ ૫૮ નીશાની **क**.



સુચના—આ પાનામાં દીપાસાના ૭ છોકરામાં ત્રણ છોકરાનો વંશવેલો છે અને આ પાનામાં બાકીના ત્રણ છોકરાનો વંશવેલો છે.

- (૪) માણેકચંદ
  - કેસરીસંગ
    - ફતેસંગ
      - ચંદનસંગ
        - કલ્યાણસંગ
          - તારાચંદ
            - ગુલાબબેન
              - ઉત્તમલાલ
            - વીજકોરબેન
            - મણીકુંવરબેન
              - શીવકોરબેન
              - દીવાળીબેન
              - ચંચળબેન
          - ઉત્તમચંદ કેવળવહુ
            - મોંઘીબેન
              - સકલચંદ
    - અજરાલસંગ
      - દીપચંદશા
        - મુલચંદ
          - સરૂપચંદ
            - માનચંદ નંદકોરવહુ
              - અમરતબેન
              - પારવતીબેન
              - જીવણભાઇ
              - ઉત્તમચંદ
          - દેવચંદ જસકોરવહુ
            - નેમચંદ ઝવેરવહુ
              - કંકુબેન
          - દીવાળીબેન
            - હીરાભાઇ
            - ઉદેચંદ શીવકોરવહુ

શાંતિદાસ શેઠના ચોથા પુત્ર જેની વંશવૃદ્ધિ સુરતમાં થયેલ છે તેનો વંશવેલો આ પાનામાં છે.

Broker:

Broker was a middleman between the buyer and seller. They formed a specialized commercial group in Medieval India. With the advent of Muslims in India, the brokers were generally termed '*dalal*', which is an Arabic word.[41] Broker was a link between the producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers.

The institution of broker encompassed various duties and privileges such as *dalali* or commission, duty as agent, control of price, regular supply of commodities negotiator, commercial transactor, command over shipping and advance money.

Commission: Ziauddin Barani describes the '*dalal*' generally in their roles as mediators between buyers and sellers, enacting their bribe (commission) from both the parties.[42] It seems that generally the total commission of a broker amounted to 1%, being taken from each party.[43] The factors reported in 1616 that they paid the broker 1%, the latter charged the buyer also – "*one, if not two percent in addition.*" This implicitly shows that the broker at times took 3% in total from both the parties.[44]

In 1670s, the brokers of Surat (for the company and private persons), who were allowed 2% on all bargains.[45] In 1690s, Ovington says that – "to these is allowed 3% for their care and trouble.[46]

Barani mentions that the brokers were the *hakiman* (rulers) of the market, and considers them as a cause of the higher prices of commodities. On another place he says that with help of brokers, a sultan could make a change in the prices.[47] Barani makes observation about the chief brokers which indicate that this kind of organization was operational at Delhi. This indicates that the institution of broker was not invented by Europeans; it was a traditional institution which was carried on by Indians for their trade.

Agent: In the case of foreigners, the broker also worked as agent (*wakil*) the man responsible to the local Mughal authorities for their good behaviour. It was essential

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[41] Qaisar, A.J., 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', P.I.H.C., 1973, p. 1.

[42] Barani used the term '*rishwat*'/bribe for commission. *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*, op. cit., pp. 312, 313.

[43] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', op. cit., p. 34.

[44] Ibid., p. 35.

[45] Fryer, II, p. 217.

[46] Ovington, p. 233.

[47] *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*, p. 314.

because the European merchants often borrowed money. Sometimes the foreigners left the Indian shore without remembering to repay the debts.

The Mughal authorities wished naturally to have some people of the city to fall back upon in such cases. Besides the foreigners 'created trouble', so broker was indispensable office.[48]

Price Control: During the period of Akbar, the brokers came to be associated with the market affairs. It was the duty of the *kotwal* to appoint a chief and a broker for every occupational group in each '*mohalla*' of the city who were expected to a general supervision of the selling and buying in the market. No transaction was made without the knowledge of the broker - the '*mir-i-mohalla*' and '*khabardar-i-mohalla*'; in case of default, fines were imposed. Also, the names of the buyers and sellers were noted in the '*roznamcha*' (daily report) of the market.[49] During the 17th century, we learn that the state appointed 'town-broker' for market transaction,[50] who recorded the types, quality of goods purchased and sold (wholesale), their prices and also the names of both the sellers and buyers.[51]

Regular Supply of Commodities: The coming of the European companies to India gave a sudden fillip to trade and commerce in the country. This provided a wider field for the brokers, because there was a need to establish contacts with various centres of production and to communicate with the local traders and craftsmen that is why European merchants were dependent on Indian local brokers. The foreign merchants were not familiar with the country's pattern of marketing and language, (*although English East India Company encouraged its factors by monetary rewards to learn the Indian languages in order to avoid leaning too heavily on the Indian brokers; but this was not much of success.*)[52] and they had to depend on the native brokers for their business. It was an institution which reached its peak in the 17th century. They were essential for foreign merchants from outside country and their role was to provide those commodities which

[48] 'Indian Merchants in the Age of Partnership', pp. 30-31.

[49] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 144-145.

[50] *EFI*, 1637-41, p. 301.

[51] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 8.

[52] Fryer, I, pp 217-218.

were not easily available, and were provided by them at the right time and on the reasonable cost. To ensure a regular supply, money was given in advance to the weavers. The clients often gave the brokers a large sum of money for investment, which they generally 'put-out' to weavers, or made direct purchase of readymade goods.[53] At Broach, in 1623 A.D., the English brokers were given 4,800 *mahmudis* for '*necasnees*' (cloth), and 7,200 *mahmudis* for broad *battas*.[54] Apart from the weavers, they had to maintain contacts with the "washers, beaters, dyers, nay to the very packers, indeed everything......"[55] They were also expected to buy goods, for example, cotton-yarn, brought by the petty traders to the client's warehouse.[56] The clients sometimes engaged the brokers for certain odd jobs, like, recovery of outstanding debts.[57]

In 1619 A.D., when the governor of Baroda banned the English trade, the company advised its factors to have money with the "*securest broker that understand may provide the goods you appoint and send them securely to Broach*", quite understandably in their own names as a cover.[58]

The brokers were busy in a variety of functions besides the primary job of procuring goods at cheaper rates for their clients'. In the second half of the 16th century, the brokers at Cambay welcomed the foreign merchants, and had their goods unloaded, and after paying the customs, conveyed the goods to the house where they had already made arrangements for the lodging of the merchants.[59]

Negotiation in a Fresh Area: During the 17th century Surat had become a great commercial centre. The brokers are reported to have control over the Swally road on a ship's arrival, and forced themselves on foreign merchants for taking bargain on their behalf.[60] They gave a support in getting the goods loaded and unloaded, and assisted the

[53] *EFI*, 1622-23, pp. 163-184.

[54] Ibid., p. 249.

[55] *EFI*, 1661-64, pp. 111-113; *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 287.

[56] Ibid., p. 111.

[57] *EFI*, 1634-36, pp. 203, 79.

[58] *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 98.

[59] 'The role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 20.

[60] Fryer, I, p. 292.

goods merchants in counting their bales of goods on the ship.[61] The brokers were greatly helpful in the opening up of new areas of trade for their clients. In 1635 A.D., when the English company intended to extend its activities to Sindh, the factors first wrote a letter to the brokers.[62] Benidas, the English broker was sent to Bijapur in 1652 A.D. for commercial negotiations.[63] On one hand, they helped the European companies in procuring goods of the Indian merchants for their ships in making up the freight. On the other hand, they obliged the Indian merchants in getting accommodation out the ships.[64]

Classification: The brokers could be divided into four categories:-

1. Those who were the regular employees of the merchants, company (*chief brokers of English company were called the 'chief house broker'/'broker general'*)[65] or others.

2. Those who worked for more than one client simultaneously (*in 1635 A.D., Kalyan Parekh acted as the broker of the English company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood, an Indian merchant*[66]*; in 1638 A.D., a broker is reported to have been in the service of both the English and Dutch companies*[67]*, and in 1690s, a Parsi merchant broker- Rustom Manek, worked as for three European companies*[68]).

3. This category comprised of those who were actually free lancers and took on business deals strictly on an adhoc basis.[69] They were known as broker contractors (the rate of commission of the brokers of this category was surprisingly very high – 10% to 10.5 %. The reason behind these high rates was that the transaction in these cases involved a large amount of investment.)[70].

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[61] Fawcett, Charles, *The Travels of Abbe Carre in India and the near East 1672-1674*, 2 vols., I, New Delhi, 1990, p. 162.

[62] *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 117.

[63] Ibid., 1651-54, pp. 37, 41, 46.

[64] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 119.

[65] *EFI*, 1646-50, p.276; Also see *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 246.

[66] *EFI*, 1634-36, pp. 292-93.

[67] Mandelslo, p. 41.

[68] *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 7.

[69] *EFI*, 1661-64, pp. 188-189; Also see *EFI*, 1665-67, p. 263; *EFI*, 1668-69, pp. 7-8.

[70] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 36.

4. Those brokers who were appointed by the state to register the sale and purchase of articles.[71]

The class of small brokers was called '*dalals*'.[72] There were two categories of brokers, viz. general and sub-brokers. The latter could be more usefully described as commodity brokers, such as in textile or indigo. The commodity brokers worked also as intermediaries for the 'house-brokers'. Each English factory had its own house broker. These brokers assisted the English in steering their goods through the custom and toll ports. They had contacts in the transportation trade and knew various methods of dealing with the Mughal bureaucracy, right up to the upper level. When certain factories were closed, brokers took over complete change of the English trade in the area.[73]

Predominance of Banias: The majority of brokers were Hindus of the *vaisya* caste, generally called by the foreigners as the '*Banias*'.[74] Ovington wrote in 1690's that "*The brokers of Bania caste were appointed for the buying and more advantageous disposing of the companies goods, who were skilled in the rates and values of all the commodities in India.* "[75] Tavernier advised the people of his country to select a broker '*who should be a native of the country, an idolater and not a Musalaman, because all the workmen with whom he will have do are idolators.*'[76] Even the Muslims traders preferred the Hindu brokers.[77] Tavernier observes that the Hindu brokers generally organized on family lines.[78] Most of them came from the *Bania* families, who in the words of Fryer, '*were expert in all the studied arts of thriving and insinuation, and they well understood the constant turning of cash amounts.*' The head of these families of brokers was selected on the basis of his experience, who held 'all the joint property in trust to turn it to account' in order to secure benefit to all the kinsmen. Every evening when they returned from business, they

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[71] *EFI*, 1637-41, p. 301.

[72] *European Merchants Capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records 1630-1668*, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

[73] Ibid.

[74] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 11.

[75] Ovington., p. 233.

[76] Tavernier, II, p. 144.

[77] Hamilton, I, p. 150.

[78] Tavernier, II, p. 26.

assembled at one place to render an account of what had been done during the day, for consultation for future.[79] Fryer observes that- "*without these, neither you nor the natives themselves shall do any business.*"[80] Probably the Parsis had a similar organization.[81]

In 1634 A.D., he advanced 4,000 rials, and also gave bill on Agra (from Surat) for Rs. 50,000.[82] On another occasion, he, along with another merchant of Surat, stood sureties for Rs. 1,07,000 in favour of the English company.[83] The highest amount ever advanced was by Benidas, the English broker, to the company: the amount being Rs. 2,00,000 at 5/8% per month.[84]

The Bania broker was an essential and vital link in both indigenous and foreign trade in Surat and in other commercial centres in India. He knew the artisans and their skills as well as their modes of work. Its own agents fanned out over the countryside keeping in constant contact with the productive processes. Though he exploited the artisans for his own enrichment, the artisan, on his part, was very dependent on the Bania for the marketing of goods he produced. The Bania knew the country and its market as no one else did. He was indispensible for finding transportation of goods from Swally to Surat and onwards to Burhanpur and Agra.[85]

The term *Bania* covered a variety of mercantile functions. Many of these worked as broker for their richer caste fellows as well as Indian Muslims, Artisans, Turks, Arabs and European traders. At the close of the 16th century and beginning of the 17th century they emerged as fairly numerous groups of merchants and brokers. No European house could have worked without the assistance of its brokers, and the brokers often used their strategic position for amassing personal fortunes at the cost of the foreign traders.[86]

The best known early broker was Tapidas Parekh, who is first referred to in 1609 A.D. while the last available reference to him comes in 1660 A.D., which covers a period of

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[79] Tavernier, II, p. 26.

[80] Fryer, I, p. 212.

[81] *EFI,* 1978, p. 260.

[82] *EFI*, 1634-36, pp. 103, 169.

[83] *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 240.

[84] *EFI*, 1651-54, p. 119.

[85] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 128.

[86] Ibid., p. 117.

more than half a century. He helped the English to find accommodation in Baroda and performed a variety of chores for their establishments. In 1634 A.D. he was paid an annual allowance of 500 *mahmudis*, though he continued to deal on his own account in several commodities, such as coral and silver. He gave his own bills of exchange for Agra, dealt with the Dutch, stood sureties for Englishmen when they were in trouble, lent large amount of money to them (Rs. 50,000).[87] Another Parekh was Tulsidaas, the brother of Tapidas' who served the English between 1636 and 1667 A.D. His son Bhimji Parekh and Kalyan Parekh continued in the company's service till the end of the century. Tulsidas dealt in coral, textile and lent large amount of money, which caused him endless trouble. He served as a cashier for the company and was always spoken of as honest and industrious.[88] In 1662 A.D., Tulsidas's son Bhimji Parekh began working as a broker for the English company in Surat. During 1668-71 A.D. Bhimji tried to get an English printer to print some "ancient Bramini writings". One was sent in 1674 A.D. but the experiment proved less than satisfactory as the English printer refused to teach the art to Indians. In July 1683 A.D. he was given a medal and chain of gold for the services rendered to the company.[89]

In 1669 A.D. he was tricked into becoming a Muslim by the local Mughal authorities and this proved to be a great heart-break to all the Banias in the town. In the same year some charges were made against Bhimji Parekh, but the Surat factory defended his ability and integrity vigorously. Earlier in 1668 A.D. he wanted to move to Bombay with his family because of religious persecution in Surat. In 1669 A.D. such persecution led a large number of Hindu merchants of Surat, significantly Bhimji in September 1669 A.D. to withdraw from Surat.[90] They had made a petition to the company for an assurance that, if they went there, they would enjoy freedom of religion and other privileges. Unfortunately the petition had been lost owing to the Dutch capturing the '*Falcon*' on its way home, and company asked for a fresh petition in English. This was complied with, but it is significant

[87] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 119.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid., p. 121.

[90] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 121; Also see *EFI*, 1670-77, p. 233.

that only Bhimji signed the petition and the former petition (it was reported) was signed by several of the chief Banias.[91]

Another oldest known broker is Jadu (*who was the member of the family of Chhota Thakur*) who was first noticed in 1608 A.D. when he served for captain Willliam Hawkins at Mughal court and also for Sir Henri Middleton[92], during 1616 A.D. and 1617 A.D. he worked for Sir Thomas Roe as a broker and a linguist.[93] Jadu's kinsmen Gourdas who was the brother of Chhota Thakur[94] and Kalyanji were brokers of the English company.[95] Two kinsmen of Jadu are mentioned to have been working as brokers at Sindh.[96] Chhota Thakur himself was appointed as 'chief broker' of the English company at Surat[97] and he tried to bring in his relatives in the company's service. His relatives worked for the company at Agra, Ahmadabad, Sindh and other places.[98] Chhota Thakur was the chief broker and linguist of English company during 1650s. In 1660 A.D. Chhota Thakur was robbed around Patna and the English claimed the same privilege for him in seeking redress from the Government as was claimed for Englishmen. He was dismissed by 1662 A.D. and then he tried to on list Virji Vora's help in forging a boycott of the English factory in reprisal. In 1664 A.D. the home of Chhota Thakur was plundered by Shivaji during the course of his sack on Surat in early January. Until his death, sometimes before 1668 A.D., Chhota Thakur was involved in a dispute about English debts to him for which an interest of Rs. 328,000 was claimed.[99]

Another leading broker was Benidas, who served English company from the 1640s to 1670s. He was sent many places in the south on errands which he alone could successfully accomplish between 1645 A.D. and 1660 A.D. he often travelled to Raybag, Rajpur, Tuticorin, Goa, Calicut, Cannanore, Bijapur through Malabar. He was also sent to trade

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[91] *EFI*, 1670-77, p. 233.

[92] Ibid., 1630-33, pp. 28, 155.

[93] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p.119.

[94] *EFI*, 1630-33, pp. 90, 208.

[95] Peter Mundi, *Travels in Europe and Asia 1608-1667*, 2 Vols., II, Hakluyt Society, 1914, p. 25.

[96] *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 160.

[97] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 276.

[98] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 276.

[99] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p.123.

with the kings of Bijapur and to Shivaji. In November 1662 A.D., he was asked to send a Brahman to Shivaji to deal with Shivaji's Brahamanas in order to prevail upon the Maratha leader for the release of English factors at Rairi. In 1652 A.D. he replaced Tulsidas Parekh, since he was ready to work on less salary. The company gave him a piece of scarlet cloth as a present in appreciation of his services. In 1652 A.D., he agreed to furnish the Surat factory on amount upto Rs. 200,000 at 5/8 percent per month. He owned a ship called '*Diamond*' and specially arranged for the company's lading for Persia. He seems to have also owned another ship, the '*Sea-flower*' which was used for coastal trade to southwestern ports such as Karwar. He had good relations with English, but he was also involved in his own mercantile and banking activities.[100]

Brokers were also associated with the payment of customs at ports, and toll on roads. They advised their clients on the exchange rates of different currencies, regional variations of weights etc.[101] In 1634 A.D., the English factors wrote to their countrymen that "*it is most usual to effect business which is at distance by a faithful broker.*"[102] The need of establishing contacts with big trading centres was felt by both the Indian and foreign merchants, this gave rise to a well-organized group of brokers.

Commercial Transaction: The merchants employed a *sarraf* also for matters connected with currency, credit bills etc., but sometimes broker acted as both '*sarraf*' and broker, or worked as a broker and *sarraf* alternately (*Chhota Thakur, an English broker, had "encroached" upon the office of Tulsi Das, the English 'sarraf', and 'taken away his duties'*[103]*; and Beni Das worked as broker and sarraf for the English company;*[104] *Tulsi Das acted as the English broker at Gambroon in 1641A.D.* [105] *as sarraf at Surat in 1646 A.D.*[106]*; Tapi Das worked as broker in 1619 A.D. at Baroda*[107]*and as Sarraf at Surat for the*

[100] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 123.

[101] *European Merchants Capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records 1630-1668*, p. 50.

[102] *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 79.

[103] Ibid., 1651-54, pp. 106-107.

[104] Ibid., 1651-54, pp. 37, 41, 119, 142.

[105] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 310.

[106] Ibid., 1646-50, p. 36.

[107] Ibid., 1618-21, p. 98.

English company in 1642 A.D.[108]), and they were employed by the merchants on a regular basis. They are reported to have drawn their salary on annual basis not monthly. English company payed to Tapidas 500 *mahmudis* per annum (about Rs. 222 a year, and, Rs. 18.5/month), and his father got 700 *mahmudis*/annum (about Rs. 312 a year, and, Rs. 26/month).[109]

The brokers leant support in the opening up new areas of trade for their clients.[110] Many brokers had knowledge of more then one European languages. Mandelslo speaks of broker of Cambay, in the service of the English and Dutch companies, who knew Portuguese.[111] The English records refer to one Dhanji who was the company's linguist in 1620s, and was paid Rs.36/month for his job.[112] It is not surprising to find that practically everyone who was interested in trade professional merchants, European companies, the Mughal Emperor, princes, nobles, governors and even the weavers had his own brokers to safeguard his interest.[113]

Command over Transport (Shipping): Apart from the brokerage and salaries, the broker had other normal channels too for getting their earnings. Many of them were engaged with their own independent trading activities, which fetched the immense profit. Tapidas often bought the English company's goods,[114] and in 1642 A.D., he is reported to have chartered a vessel of the company for Rs.5,000 *mahmudis* for a voyage from Surat to Patna, and back.[115] In 1661 A.D., two vessels of Benidas were noticed at Basra.[116] He also hired out one of his ships to an English man for 10,000 *mahmudis*.[117] In the same year,

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[108] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 21.

[109] *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 58.

[110] *European Merchants Capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records 1630-1668*, p. 50.

[111] Mandelslo, p. 41.

[112] *EFI*, 1624-29, p. 228.

[113] *EFI*, 1622-23, pp 148,153, 163-64, 184; Also see Thevenot, pp 77-78.

[114] *EFI*, 1634-36, pp. 24, 55.

[115] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 21.

[116] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 32.

[117] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 109.

Chhota Thakur and Somaji bought up a ship 'Mayflower' in partnership and "fitted for a voyage'.[118]

Mediators: In 1634 A.D., Tapidas earned Rs.250 for issuing a *hundi* of Rs.50,000 to the English company.[119] Fryer observes that besides their usual commissions, they secretly squeezed out of the price things bought; which can not be well understood for want or knowledge of their language.[120] In 1663 A.D., Somaji cheated the company by supplying clothes of inferior quality which did not tally with the 'approved samples', and there was some deficiency in the measurements too.[121] When the weavers were called upon to explain the bargain, the company found that Somaji paid them 5.375 *mahmudis*, while he had taken advances to pay the weavers at the rate of 6.25 *mahmudis* per piece, and he made 14% for himself. He took 12% as brokerage from the weavers for the whole deal. According to the company, Somaji cheated it up to not less than 25% - 30% of the advances made to him.[122] In connection with the lading of goods on freight, Abbe Carre warned his countrymen to be on their guard against brokers who often involved in conspiracies with the merchants counted twenty (bales) as ten, and thirty as fifteen, "there by robbing the French company of half of the freight."[123]

Most brokers also traded on their own account and some of them, were very rich. Examples of this were Tulsidas and his son belonging Parekh family. There were powerful merchants, like Mirza Mahmud, Khwaja Nizam, Hari Vaisya, Benidas and others, who also had wide commercial dealings with the English.[124]

Broker Organization: The big brokers also appointed a separate accountant or secretary of their own.[125] The economic need led to a further development in the organization of brokers in two respects, first, the chief brokers started employing persons other then their kinsmen as their sub-brokers or assistants to meet the shortage of 'man

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[118] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 98.

[119] *EFI*, 1634-36, p. 169.

[120] Fryer, I, pp. 211, 212.

[121] *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 111.

[122] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', pp. 43-44.

[123] *The Travels of Abbe Carre in India and the near East 1672-1674*, I, p. 162.

[124] *European Merchants Capital & the Indian Economy: Surat Factory Records 1630-1668*, pp. 51-52.

[125] Ovington, p.170.

power' in the family. In 1650 A.D., the English factors at Swally reported that Chhota Thakur had "his creatures" besides his relatives, in almost all other employments of yours abroad and at home.[126] One of Chhota's agents, Hari Mehta, was at Goa[127] and Deodas, in 1662 A.D., was reported to have been an 'assistant' of Chhota Thakur.[128] In 1674 A.D., Bhimji Parekh's 'sub-broker' worked at Dharangaon.[129] In 1683 A.D., Kalyan Parekh was reported to have employed an 'under broker'.[130] For this they received an extra commission from their clients.[131] The extra commission in this case was 1%. And secondly, there arose the institution of 'partnership' between two or more reputed brokers. The best example of a partnership was that of Chhota Thakur and Somaji Chitta, both belonged to Surat, and incidentally, the houses of both of them were burnt down by Shivaji's men in 1670-71 A.D.[132] Trikamdas worked as an associate of English broker at Broach.[133]

High officials of the state were often interested in trade but these officials were not proper merchants. So they used to manage their trade with the help of local merchants and such merchants knew and respected the norms of the system. Merchants and producers had the inalienable right to sell to the highest bidder. Even contract could be broken if a higher bid came along, provided the money taking in advance was returned. The system of production and distribution knew a large number of interdependent functionaries and each had his place, his function and his rights. Neither money nor power could set aside the meanest broker in the smallest village.[134]

Advanced Money: English, Dutch, French and Portuguese employed some 150 brokers in Surat, Agra, Ahmadabad, Burhanpur, Broach, Baroda, Bulsar, Gandevi, Navsari, Bombay and Rajpur.[135] There are a large number of references to the fact that the brokers

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[126] *EFI*, 1646-50, p. 276.

[127] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 167.

[128] Ibid., 1661-64, p. 90.

[129] Ibid., 1670-77, p. 236.

[130] Ibid., 1634-36, p. 293.

[131] Ibid., 1670-77, p.236.

[132] Ibid., 1661-64, pp. 98, 212-213; Also see *EFI*, 1668-69, p. 33.

[133] *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 101.

[134] 'Indian Merchants in the Age of Partnership', p. 29.

[135] *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 118.

often advanced money to their clients, sometimes even free of interest. The English broker, Jaichand, at Gambroon, gave an interest-free loan to the company.[136] In this connection, the name of Tapidas Parekh was especially referred to by the English factors in glowing terms.

A Parsi man, Rustamji Manekji was worked as a broker for English and Dutch in Surat; and a regular visitor of the court of Nawab and had a huge property and belonged to a priestly family. He had also built *Rustam Bagh* in the city and that area is famous as *Rustam Pura* on his name. He also constructed a well in Surat and an inscription is also there on the well in Gujarati.[137] He was a broker to the Dutch before 1681 A.D. and then figured prominently as a broker to the Portuguese and the new English company.[138] The Portuguese appointed him their agent in Surat for issuing passports to Indian ships, and also to act as their attorney in their relations with the Mughal Government in the city. He travelled to Daman, Ahmadabad and Goa for his patrons, and seems to have amassed a fortune from his involvement in shipbuilding and trade.[139]

A large number of Indian brokers, mostly the Hindus, were employed by the merchants at foreign ports, and commercial centres, like Gambroon (*Tulsidas as the English broker at Gambroon*[140]*; Jaichand of Surat as the English broker*[141]*, he was replaced by Thakursi of Sindh*[142] *and in 1662 A.D., Thakursi was replaced by Santokh Becharaj*[143]), Basra (*Shankar as English company's broker at Basra*[144]) in Persia etc. The majority of Banias in

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136 *EFI*, 1646-50, p. 223.

137 *"dharam mokh arthe andharu rustamji manekji ai aa kuo bandhave chhe samvat 1755 na sarawan sud 3" Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 7.

138 *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 127; *Suratni Mukhtasir Haqiqat*, p. 7.

139 *Surat in Seventeenth Century*, p. 127.

140 *EFI*, 1637-41, p. 310.

141 Ibid., 1646-50, pp. 153, 209, 216, 223; Also see *EFI*, 1651-54, pp. 188, 210, 228, 244, 245; *EFI*, 1655-60, pp.171, 233.

142 *EFI*, 1651-54, pp. 188, 228, 245, 269.

143 Ibid., 1661-64, p. 75.

144 Ibid., 1637-41, p. 168.

Gambroon came from Sindh.[145] A few brokers of the English company are reported to have served for very long periods, varying from 20 to 50 years.[146]

The companies used to have a close watch on the brokers and a strict checking of the quality of goods supplied by them, and this reserved the brokers and they produced violent reaction. One broker Shamdas was actually charged of having poisoned an English factor.[147] In 1644 A.D., Dhanji was accused of 'sorcery' to destroy an English factor.[148] Fryer had warned that it was safer to let them have their way "than to hazard being poisoned for praying too nearly to their actions."[149] The best course for the clients to get rid of undesirable brokers was to dismiss them, but this was not easy to do in every case.[150] In some cases, the dismissed brokers sought the help of Virji Vora, one of the most influential merchants of the Surat, who in retaliation prohibited the merchants to deal with the English goods.[151] When a broker, Deodas was imprisoned for his frauds by the English company, Virji Vora immediately came to save him.[152] It can be observed that the patronage received from big merchants like Virji Vora was probably the reason that the former kept them posted with vital commercial information, on the other hand, the English company also utilized others' brokers for obtaining such information.[153]

However, the relation between the broker and the company were not always bad. In 1621 A.D., when the English company found out that the earnings of Mahidas at Surat had been reduced owing to sending of goods to other places for sale, the former resolved to help him by giving 1000 *mahmudis* and other gifts in compensation. Jadu was given Rs.23 and a '*shash*' on the festival of Holi by his client.[154]

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[145] Fryer, I, p. 167.

[146] *EFI*, 1630-33, p. 275; *EFI*, 1634-36, pp. 172, 265; *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 111.

[147] *EFI*, 1678, p. 287.

[148] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 215.

[149] Fryer, I, pp. 217-218.

[150] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 48.

[151] *EFI*, 1661-64, p. 113.

[152] Ibid., 1637-41, p. 204.

[153] Ibid., 1630-33, p. 116.

[154] 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', p. 50.

To sum up our discussion, we can say that the brokers were necessary part of the commercial society. They worked as a connecting bridge between the seller and buyer, for which they got commission from both the parties. They negotiated in different areas of trade. As Banias they were the predominant community in this field, they controlled the price of commodities in the market and had command over the transport, especially the shipping. They also worked as mediators and linguists for Europeans. The most interesting aspect was that their organization was based on family line.

Sahukar & Saraf:

Sahukar was also called *saraf.* This was an important group of merchants, no one can imagine a village without *saraf.* They were businessmen but their prime duty was exchange and to check the purity of metal of coins[155] and East India Company appointed a group of *sarafs* for the purpose of checking metal's purity.[156] The company needed *sarafs* because they were experts in their works of payments, minting of hard metal coins etc. They had to check the purity of coins as well. If any client experienced loss because of the metal or value of coins then *saraf* would be responsible for it.[157] Another important work of *saraf* was to issue *hundis* of bill of exchange, by which one could send large sum of money from one place to another, without any risk, and a person who had taken a *hundi* on exchange of an amount, could cash that document at any place in a particular time-span by charging some interest.[158]

English merchants preferred to send their money through *hundis*. The rate of interest was not fixed and varied in different places. In 1616 A.D. rate of interest was 2.5% from Burhanpur to Ahmadabad and from Thatta to Ahmadabad.[159]

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[155] *Bharat ka Samajik, Sanskritik Aur Aarthik Itihas*, II, p. 110.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid., pp. 110-111.

[158] Ibid., p. 111.

[159] Ibid.

One can thus conclude that each institution of the merchants was vital for smooth conduct of mercantile transactions of Indian and foreign merchants. These institutions operated at local and international levels to facilitate commercial activity in Gujarat.

Conclusion

This work aimed for an explorative study of the 'Social Life and Cultural Practices Among the Merchant Group in Mughal Gujarat', their life style, traditions, rituals, their life as a house-holder, relations with Mughal authorities and their religious matters alongside their money investments and financial matters. The same was investigated on the basis of mine of information contained in regional Gujarati sources, Persian and European sources.

Our investigation enabled us to conclude that the state of Gujarat lies between dry Rajasthan and the very wet west-coast plains. So the region formed a contrast between two divergent regions, which had both its merits and demerits. However it makes a suitable area of human settlement. Another important feature is the natural drainage of the land. A good bay is there in the form of the Gulf of Cambay. The river system is flowing in Gujarat from east to west. Most important factor is estuaries at the mouth of river *Mahi*, *Narmada* and *Tapti*, which like window towards the sea. There are some 12 rivers in Gujarat flowing into Gulf of Cambay, which gave a fillip to marine trade. These rivers provided ideal and suitable conditions for merchants to import and export their products. This region had well defined trade-routes and sea ports, which connected this region with the other areas of the country. Shipbuilding and textiles were the main features of this *subah*. All these features supported Gujarat to become an industrial region coveted for mercantile pursuits by the merchant communities.

There were a number of Indian and foreign merchant communities which very influential during 16^{th} -17^{th} country in Gujarat, such as Banias, Bohras, Memons, Khojas, Parsi, European, Chalebis and Ghanchis etc. Among these groups Banias were the oldest and dominant group and had 84 castes in Gujarat. Bohras were another important group. In this community some merchants were extremely wealthy and influential, who received honours and titles from Mughal Emperors. Europeans also an important group of merchants settled in this region and worked for their companies and some of them operated independent merchants. Chalebis, Khojas, Memons, Ghanchis, and other important groups were also involved in trade and commerce. Parsis were initially an agricultural class, but they became as a group of businessman and merchants in late 17^{th} and 18^{th} centuries. These merchants acted sometimes in coordination and at others were interdependent, for example, Bania broker helped the foreign merchants in various manners.

These merchants' communities had settled in Gujarat. Merchants had well maintained houses. As Mandelslo mentioned that the Dutch and English house were used to be called 'Lodges', and according to Thevenot – "their apartments were very pretty", which indicated that European merchants were enjoying a luxurious life in Gujarat. The merchant communities took considerable interest in their lifestyle and lavishly invested in luxurious items. Dresses of the merchant communities varied according to the domicile area. They also had apparent aesthetics to appreciate and adopt the variant luxuries.

Manucci, Abul Fazl and Badaoni furnish fragmentary information of the marriages of girls at early age, Manucci also said about *Purdah* among the Muslim ladies, and on the other hand, Bohra ladies used to prepare perfumed oil at home. Women enjoyed property rights. All this shows that ladies in Mughal Gujarat enjoyed their lives within the four walls of their houses. There was considerable variance in the social customs related to merchants.

Some Bohra merchants got honour and a big amount for their scholarly activities which indicate that merchants were well educated and good scholars who had their own libraries and a separate department for translation work. So we can say that merchants were not only busy in commercial activities, they also had some time to spend on their leisure hobbies and scholarly activities. There seems great emphasis laid by each community on the pursuance of their rights and customs. Unfortunately these aspects have not received the due attention of the historians of the region as yet.

The merchants had good relations will Mughal officials. Virji Vora a Jain merchant and Abdul Ghafur a Bohra merchant of Surat, and Shantidas of Ahmadabad, they had a great influence over local officials and people. They used their influence over the officials to get profits and favour. Some of the merchants were really very wealthy, made a strong position in the society and in their community. Because they earned and owned a huge property and money, they were in a strong position and were able to give loans to officials and even to the princes or *subahdars* of Gujarat, whenever they needed, and in return they got favours from Mughal princes and their officials on different issues. Money played an important role behind these mutual understanding between merchants and imperial officials. They maintained cordiality with the Mughal court.

Money played a major role in the life of merchants. It can be treated as parameter to observe a merchant's position and status in the society and influence over his own community. They enjoyed a luxurious life with all the possible facilities; descendants of Ghafur lived like princes, had interference in the local administration, and descendants of Shantidas got a permanent title of *nagarsheth.* But the merchants not only used money for their own profits and interests. They also spent lavishly on charity and social service. In the accounts of European travellers, there are several references of vetenary hospitals for animals in almost all the main towns of Gujarat, which were run by money raised by merchants.

There were some institutions of merchants to control and to maintain discipline among the merchant communities and to avoid the competition among the merchants, like guilds or *shrenis, nagarsheth* and *mahajans. Mahajans* also worked as the leader of the community and an intermediary between administrators and his community. Some institutions took the responsibility to check the purity of metals of coins and other articles, like *sahukar* and *sarraf.* Khushalchand, the grandson of Shantidas, was called *nagarsheth* in *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* and other documents. So we can say that this title was just an honour for a particular merchant or family. It was not a kind of institution. One finds title suffixed to the names of the members of Shantidas family and the story behind the *nagarsheth* tradition only by the Maganlal Vakhatchand in his Gujarati work *Ambadano Itihas.*

Brokers were the most important group in merchants' society and were a link between the producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. The institution of broker was not invented by Europeans, it was a traditional institution which was carried on by Indians for their trade. The coming of the European companies to India gave a sudden increase in trade and commerce in the country. This provided a wider field for the brokers, because there was a need to establish contacts with various centres of production and to communicate with the local traders and craftsmen that is why European merchants were dependent on Indian local brokers. The foreign merchants were not familiar with the country's pattern of marketing and language, (*although English East India Company encouraged its factors by monetary rewards to learn the Indian languages in order to avoid leaning too heavily on the Indian brokers; but this was not much of success.*) and they had to depend on the native brokers for their business. We can say that they were an important segment of the commercial society.

They worked as a connecting bridge between the seller and buyer, for which they got commission from both the parties. They negotiated in different areas of trade. As Banias they were the predominant community in this field. They controlled the price of commodities in the market and had command over the transport, especially the shipping. They also worked as mediators and linguists for Europeans. The most interesting aspect was that their organization was based on family line.

Thus the present study concludes that despite vigorous commercial enterprise of the various merchant communities they have to be contextualised not only in economic perspective but also as a major social entity. The variant religious and cultural practices are equally significant dimensions which have enriched in multifarious manner the Gujarati culture and Indian heritage at large. The rich cultural synthesis of communities like Parsis, Ghanchis, Bohra, Banias have lent much to the aesthetic values of the Indian subcontinent.

Appendices

Appendix – I

Nagarshethni Vanshavali or tradition of *Nagarsheth*

(Extract from the *Amdavadno Itihas* by Maganlal Vakhatchand)

This is the story of Shantidas' emergence as a *Nagarsheth*, merchant and his growth as a jeweller is given by Maganlal Vakhatchand in his *Amdavadno Itihas*. According to this story there was an honest and kind jeweller household man named Shantidas, who used to give his services, food and other help to a *jogi*. Shantidas had a servant whose name was also Shantidas.

One day *jogi* asked Shantidas that why you are doing so much for me? You have spent a big amount on me. Shantidas replied that you are a nice person and I love to do something for a person like you. Then *jogi* decided to prepare a *mantra* for Shantidas, and he went in a cave for six months for this purpose. Shantidas used to go there in the cave to give necessary things to the *jogi*.

On the last day Shantidas due to some work did not go to the cave and sent his servant Shantidas to take the *mantra* from the *jogi*. *Jogi* gave the *mantra* to Shantidas and said – "*nobody will remain hungry in your generations.*" When servant was coming back, he thought – my *sheth* is already very wealthy and well off, I have to keep this mantra with me and I will be a rich man, and he went to Delhi.

There was an issue in Delhi that Emperor had a diamond and he needed a person who could check the purity of that diamond, if the person was unable to check it, he would get death-punishment. All the jewellers were afraid and asked for some-time to find out a person for this work, emperor gave one day for it. Next day Shantidas reached Delhi and all the jewellers asked about him and his work. Shantidas said that – I am a *zaveri* and I have great knowledge of diamonds. Then all the jewellers sent Shantidas in front of the emperor. He checked the diamond and conformed the purity of it, emperor was happy and honoured him. Shantidas got the status of court-jewller and royal ladies started calling him their brother and he was allowed to go into the *harem* as well. One day he asked to go back, emperor allowed him and gave him many presents and dresses but Shantidas denied to take all these thing, then emperor asked him Shantidas's wish and he said – "*there is no place like Ahmadabad and I want to be a 'nagarsheth' of that*

city." Emperor gave this honour to him, and Shantidas and his generations enjoyed thi title.

નગરશેઠની વંશાવળી.

દીલી પ્રગણામાં એક ગાંમ હશે તાંહાં સાંતીદાસ કરીનેં એક મહરથ. રેહેતો હતો. એ સાંતીદાસને તાંહાં એક બીજો સાંતીદાસ નાંમનો ચાકર રેહેતો હતો. હવે એ શેઠ એક જોગીસ્વરની સેવા કરતાં કરતાં નેં તેમનું પોશણ કરતાં ઘણા દાહાડા થઆ. હેવામાં એક દાહાડો એ જોગીસ્વર તથા સાંતીદાસ વાતો કરે છે હેવામાં હેવી વાત નીકળી કે સાંતીદાસ તમે કોઈ દાહાડાની માહારી શેવા કરો છો નેં માહારા ખાધા પીધાની તજવીજ રાખો છો તેમાં તમનેં શો ફાએદો છે નેં તમનેં તે બાબતમાં પાંચ સાત હજાર રૂપૈઆ ખરચ થઆ હશે. તારે સાંતીદાસ બોલા સાહેબ તમારી ચાકરી કરવાનું કાંમ મળુ છે એ શું થોડો ફાએદો છે. તમારા જેવા ઊત્તમ પુરૂષની સેવા તે કંઈથી મળે. પછી પેલા જોગીસ્વરે મન સાથે વીચાર કરો કે એને આટલા બધા વરશથી ચાકરી કરી છે માટે માહારે પણ એના ઊપર ઊપકાર કરવો. એવું ધારીનેં બોલા કે એ સાંતીદાસ હું એક કાંમ બતાવું છું તે કરશો; સાંતીદાસ બોલા હા સાહેબ તમારી શેવામાં હાજર છું. તારે જોગીસ્વર બોલા કે હું તારે 'વાસ્તે એક જંત્ર કરવાનો છું નેં તે જંત્રની શીધી કરવાનેં હું ૭ મહીના સુધી ભુંઈરામાં રહીશ માટે આ જાળીએથી તાહારે નીત્ય પાંચ શેર દૂધ નેં શેર સાકર મનેં આપવી. એ પ્રમાણે ૭ મહીના સુધી કરવું. સાંતીદાસે કહીઉં કે સારૂં સાહેબ. પછી જોગીસ્વરે એ જંત્ર કરવા માંડ્યો નેં સાંતીદાસે નીત્ય પાંચ શેર દૂધ નેં શેર શાકર આપવા માંડું. એ પ્રમાંણે આપાં કરે છે. હવે એક દાહાડાનેં વિશે એ શેઠે વીચારૂ કે આજ ૭ મહીના થઆ માટે દુધ શાકર આપવા જાઊં. એમ ધારીનેં પોતે નાહ્યા નેં જાળીએથી દુધ સાકર આપીનેં પુછું સાહેબ પેલો જંત્ર થઓ. ત્યારે જોગીએ જવાબ દીધો જે ના નથી થઓ. કાલે ૭ મહીના પુરા થાય છે માટે કાલે થશે. તે દાહાડે શેઠ પાછા ગઆ. બીજે દાહાડે પોતે વીચારૂં કે કાલની ગોડે નહી થઓ હોએ માટે હું માણુસનેં દુધ સાકર લેઈનેં મોકલું તે આપતો આવશે નેં એ જંત્ર થઓ છે કે નથી થઓ એની ખબર કાહાડતો આવશે. એવું ધારીનેં સાંતીદાસ શેઠે પોતાના સાંતીદાસ નામના ચાકરનેં મોકલો. તે ચાકર જઈનેં જોગેસ્વરને પુછુ કે સાહેબ એ જંત્ર થઓ ? ત્યારે જોગે-સ્વરે પુછું કે કોણ છે ? ચાકર બોલો કે એ તો હું સાંતીદાસ. જોગીસ્વરે સાંતીદાસ શેઠ સમજીનેં એ જંત્ર આપો નેં કહીઉં કે તું તથા તાહારી પેહેડીમાં કોઈ નાગો ભુખો નહી રેહે નેં વળી અંધારૂં હતુ તેથી મોહો

ઠીકામાં ના આવું કે એ ચાકર ઓળખાએ. પછી સાંતીદાસ ચાકરે રસ્તામાં આવતાં આવતાં વીચાર્યું કે માહારો શેઠ તાલેવંત થાય તેના કરતાં હું જ તાલેવંત થાઊ જ નહીં. એવું ધારીનેં એ જંત્ર શેઠનેં ન આપેા પણ પાછા શેઠની ગેાડારમાં જઈનેં એક ઘેાડા ઊપર સાંમાંન નાંખી સ્વાર થઈ પેાતે ભાગી નીકળેા નેં દડમજલ દીલી શેહેર આવેા.

એવામાં દીલીમાં એક વાત થઈ છે કે બાદશાહ પાસે એક ઝવેર છે નેં તેનું પારખું ને કીમત કરાવવી છે તેથી દીલીનાં ઝવેરીનેં બેાલાવીનેં કહીયું છે કે આ ઝવેરનું પારખું કરી આપો નેં પારખું બરાબર નહી કરેા તેા તમારેા જીવ લઈશ. તારે ઝવેરીઓએ વીચાર્યું કે આંમાંથી આપણું આવી બનું નેં હવે બચવા કઠણ છીએ. એવેા વીચાર કરીનેં જવાબ દીધેા જે સાહેબ અમારા ઝવેરીના માહાજનને માથે એક શેઠીઆ છે નેં તેનેં પારખું ઘણું સારૂં છે માટે તેનેં તેડીનેં કાલે આવીશું તારે બાદશાએ રજા આપી. પેલા ઝવેરી ઘેર જઈનેં વીચાર કરવા બેઠા કે હવે શેા ઊપાય કરવેા. પછી એવું ધાર્યું કે કેાઈકનેં ઓઠવવેા નેં કેહેવું કે આ અમારા ઝવેરીના માહાજંનમાં બધાઓ કરતાં એનેં પારખું સારૂં છે. પછી એવેા માણુસ સેાધી કાહાડવાની તાબીરમાં ફરે છે. એવામાં આ સાંતીદાસ એકઠા થયા. ઝવેરીએ તેમનેં પુછ્યું કે તમે કીયા ગામના છેા નેં તમે શેા ધંધેા કરે છેા; તારે સાંતીદાસે ગપ મારી કે અમે તેા ઝવેરીનેા ધંધેા કરીએ છીએ. ઝવેરીઓએ પુછ્યું કે તમનેં પારખું સારૂં છે? તે કેહેા ત્યારે બાદશા સાહેબનેં આપનું કાંમ છે માટે આવેા તેા પણુ સારૂં. તારે સાંતીદાસ બેાલ્યા કે હા ચાલેા. તારે પછી ઝવેરીઓ–એ સારાં સારાં લુગડાં ને ઘરેણાં લાવીનેં સાંતીદાસને પેહેરાવ્યા. તે પેહેરીનેં સાંતીદાસ નેં ઝવેરીઓ સાથે બાદશાને તાંહાં ગયા નેં ઊંધેા પગ ઘાલીને બેઠા. પછી ઝવેરી બેાલ્યા સાહેબ તમારે જે ઝવેરનું પારખું કરાવવું હેાય તે લાવેા. આ અમારા માહાજંનનેા શેઠ કરી આપશે. બાદશાએ તે ઝવેર આપ્યું તે લેઈનેં સાંતીદાસે સારી પેઠે તપાસ્યું. નેં સાહેબ આ ઝવેરમાં કીડેા છે. તારે બાદશાએ તે ઝવેર ભગાવ્યું તારે તેમાંથી એક કીડારૂપેા કકેા નીકળેા. તારે બાદશા બેાલ્યા કે પારખું બરાબર કર્યું નેં પછી સેાનાનાં કડાં નેં પાલખી વાળીનેા સરપાવ આપ્યેા. પછી સાંતીદાસ બાદશાના દરબારમાં આવતા જતા થયા નેં બાદશાના માંનીતા થયાં નેં રેહેતાં રેહેતાં તેમના જનાનખાનામાં જવા લાગા નેં રાણીઓનેં બેહેન કહીનેં બેાલાવી. તારે રાંણીઓએ તેમને ભાઈ કહીનેં બેાલાવ્યા. પછી દાહાડે દાહાડે હેત વધતું ગયું. રાંણીઓએ પેાતાના સગા ભાઈ કરતાં સાંતીદાસને આલે ગણવા માંડયા. સાંતીદાસ તાંહાં ઘણા

દાહાડા રહ્યા પછી રાંણીઓને કહીયું કે એ બેહેનો હવે હું તો અહીઆંથી જઈશ. તારે બેહેનોએ કહીયું કે અહીઆંથી જવાય નહી, તમારે તો અહીઆ જ રેહેવું. એ પ્રમાણે ઘણું ઘણું કહીયું પણ સાંતીદાસ તો હઠ લેઈ નેં બેઠો કે માહારે તો જવું નેં જવું, તાહારે રાંણીઓએ કહીયું કે તું માહારો ભાઈ કેહેવાઓ તેથી તહનેં ઠાલો માલો જવા દઈએ એ તો કાંઈ ઠીક નહીં. માટે થોડા દાહાડા સબુર ખમો નેં અમનેં બાદશાહનેં કેહેવા દો. પછી તેઓ બાદશાને કહીયું કે અમારો ભાઈ સાંતીદાસ જાય છે તેમનેં કાંઈ વીદાયગરી આપવી. નેં એવી આપવી કે તે વંશપરમપુરા ચાલે. તારે બાદશા બોલો કે કંઈ ગાંમ આપો. સાતીદાસનેં ગાંમ આપવા માંડાં તે લીધા નહીં. નેં કહીયું કે સાહેબ અમારે ગાંમ ના જોઈએ, અમે વાણીઆ ભાઈ. બાદશા બોલા તારે તે તમારે શું જોઈએ. સાંતીદાસે વીચારૂં કે અમદાવાદ શેહેર જેવું બીજું શેહેર કોઈ નથી માટે એ શેહેરની નગરશેઠાઈ લેઉ તો ઠીક નેં વળી આપણા વતનમાં પણ આવીશું. એવું ધારીનેં અમદાવાદની નગરશેઠાઈ માગી તારે બાદશાએ નગરશેઠાઈ આપી નેં વરશે દાહાડે રૂપૈઆ બાંધી આપી તે શીવાએ એ બીજું આપવું હશે તે આપી વદાય કીધા. સાંતીદાસ પછી અમદાવાદ આવીનેં રહ્યા. સાંતીદાસ પછી લખમીચંદ ખુશાલરાય નથુંસા વખતશા નેં પાંનાભાઈ એ અનુક્રમ પ્રમાણે નગરશેઠાઈનું કાંમ ચલાવું નેં હાલ હીમાભાઈ નગરશેઠની પદવીએ છે. તેમની ઊમર આશરે વરશ ૬૭ ની છે નેં આજને સમે અમદાવાદમાં એ મોટા શાહુકાર નેં શરવેને માથે શ્રેષ્ઠ છે. નેં એ પુરૂષનાં જન્મચરીત્રની બીના જો મલી હોત તો ઘણું સારૂં થાત પણ બરાબર મલી નહીં.



Appendix – II

This *Shatrunjaya* rock edict relates to the Jains. It is written on a wall of a Jain temple of *Shatrunjya* hills in Gujarat, consists of the names of Mughal Emperor Jahangir, Jain saints Hiravijaya Suri and Vijaysena Suri. It was written in the year V.S. 1710 i.e. A.D. 1652. This is taken from - *Gujaratna Aitihasik Lekh*, part- V (Mughal Period), Forbes Gujarat Sabha, 1981.

નં. ૭૫

શત્રુંજયનો શિલાલેખ, વિ. સં. ૧૭૧૦*

શત્રુંજયની+ વિમલવસહી ટૂંકમાંના શેપકોટ મંદિરમાંના એક સ્તંભ પર આ લેખ લેખો છે.

પાઠ

१. अर्हम्
२. ॥ श्री ॥ स्वस्ति श्रीसं-
३. वत् १७१० वर्षे ज्येष्ट[1]
४. शुक्ल पष्टी[2] तिथौ गु-
५. रुवारे[×] 'श्रीउग्रसेनपु-
६. रवास्तव्यऊकेशज्ञा-
७. तीयवृद्धसाखीयकु-
८. हाडगोत्र सा । वर्द्धमा-
९. न भा । वाल्हादे पु । स-
१०. मानसिंहथानसिंह-
११. रायसिंहकनकसिंह-
१२. उग्रसेनऋषभदासैः
१३. सा । जगत्सिंहजीवण-
१४. दासप्रमुखपरिवार-
१५. युतैः स्वपितृवचनाद-
१६. त्पुण्यार्थं श्रीसहसकू-
१७. टतीर्थं कारितं स्वप्रति-
१८. ष्ठायां प्रतिष्टापितं[3] । त-
१९. पागच्छे भ । श्रीहीरवि-
२०. जयसूरिपट्टप्रभाकर-
२१. भ । श्रीविजयसेनसूरि-
२२. पट्टालंकारपातिशा-
२३. हिश्रीजिहांगीरप्रदत्त-
२४. महातपाबिरुदधारि-
२५. अनेकराजाधिराजप्र-
२६. तिबोधकारिभट्टारक-
२७. श्री७ श्रीविजयदेवसू-
२८. रीश्वरआचार्यश्रीविज-
२९. यप्रभसूरिनिर्देशात्
३०. श्रीहीरविजयसूरि-
३१. शिष्यरत्नमहोपाध्या-
३२. यश्री५ कीर्तिविज-
३३. य म । शिष्योपाध्या-
३४. यश्रीविनयविजय-
३५. यगणिभिः प्रतिष्ठि-
३६. तं श्रीरस्तु ॥ श्रीशत्रुंज-
३७. यमहातीर्थकार्यक-
३८. रपंडितश्री५ शांति-
३९. विजय ग । देवविजय-
४०. ग । मेघविजय ग । सा-
४१. हाय्यतः सिद्धमिदम्
४२. सूत्रधार मनजीः ॥

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* એ. ઇ., પુ. ૨, પૃ. ૭૩-૭૪
+ તા. પાલિતાણા, જિ. ભાવનગર
× ઈ. સ. ૧૬૫૪ ની ૧૧ મી મેએ—સં.

1. વાંચો જ્યેષ્ઠ.
2. વાંચો ષષ્ઠી.
3. વાંચો પ્રતિષ્ઠાપિતં.

Appendix – III

This edict is called *Shatrunjayano Paduka lekh*, which belongs to V.S. 1682 i.e. A.D. 1624., which has the names of Emperor Jahangir and Jain saint Jinchandra Suri. It is written on the feet of a statue that is why this is called *Paduka Lekh* of *Shatrunjaya.*

નં. ૭૨

શત્રુંજયનો પાદુકાલેખ, [લગ. વિ. સં. ૧૬૮૨]*

આ લેખ શત્રુંજય પર્વત+ પરની ખરતર ટ્રસહીમાં ગણધરનાં પગલાં પર કોતરેલો છે. એમાં સમયનિર્દેશ નથી, પરંતુ બાજુના પાદુકાલેખોમાં સં. ૧૬૮૨ના જ્યેષ્ઠ વદિ ૧૦ ને શુક્રવારની[1] મિતિ આપેલી છે.

પાઠ

। १ । जहांगीरनूरदीनप्रदत्तयुगप्रधानपदधारकश्री ॥
२ ॥ जिनसिंहसूरिपट्टे पूर्वाचलसहस्रकरावतारबोहित्थ-
॥ ३ ॥ वंशशृंगारप्रतिष्ठितश्रीशत्रुंजयाष्टमोद्धारसंप्राप्त-
॥ ४ ॥ [2]अर्दबिंकावरप्रसारसमधिगतमणिपर्य्यंतेतर्कप्रकार-
॥ ५ ॥ भाग्यसौभाग्य मा........धार वि. धर्म्मसी धारलदेवि कुमारवाचित धंधालीपुर प्रव्व-
॥ ६ ॥ जित जीर्णप्रति........गमलिपिविशेषविचारसकलभट्टारके । सजमेट्ट दारमकार श्री-
॥ ७ ॥ मत श्री १८ श्रीजिनराजसूरिसूरिराज्यैः । आचार्य श्रीजिनसागरसूरि......पाध्याय-
॥ ८ ॥ व्य.........आचार्यशिष्यप्रशिष्यसंसेवितचरणसरोजैः ॥ इदं भव्यजनैः प्रयुज्यमानं
॥ ९ ॥ सेव्यमानं चिरंतन........तादोपासोमौ पुत्राभ्रिरियं श्रीक्षेमशाखामुख्यश्रीशिवसुंदरो-
पाध्यायशिष्याणुशिष्य पं॰ हेमसोमगणिशिष्य वाचनाचार्य्यश्रीज्ञाननंदिविनेयलिखिता-
ष्टमोद्धारप्रतिष्ठाप्रतिष्ठितप्रतिमाभिधानभुवनकीर्ति स पं॰ लावण्यकीर्तिना लिखितो
सुखाय
॥१०॥ उत्तरदिशास्थितश्रीधर्म्मनाथादिजिनदशकगणधराणां द्वाचत्वारिंशदभ्द्विशत॰ २४२
मितानां पादुके । समवायांगत्रिषष्टिशलाकाचरित्रानुसारेण सर्वजिनाद्यगणधराभिधानं
लिखितमस्ति समस्त स्वस्ति........निदानं श्रेयोस्तु चतुर्विधश्रीसंघस्य श्री
॥११॥ संवर्धनक्रमेण शिलेयं तृतीया ॥ ३ ॥

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* શ્રીશત્રુંજયગિરિરાજદર્શન, ભા. ૨, પૃ. ૫૨
\+ તા. પાલિતાણા, જિ. ભાવનગર
૧. ઇ. સ. ૧૬૨૬ ની ૯ મી જૂને —સં.
૨. વાંચો ગ[ગ]° —સં.

Appendix – IV

This edict of *Shatrunjaya* hills was written in V.S. 1650 i.e. A.D. 1592 contains the names of Akbar, the great and Jain saints – Hiravijaya Suri, Vijayasena Suri and Vimalharshgamini.

નં. ૧૪

શત્રુંજયનો શિલાલેખ, વિ. સં. ૧૬૫૦*

શત્રુંજય પર્વતની× મોટી ટૂંકમાં આદીશ્વર ભગવાનના મુખ્ય મંદિરની દક્ષિણ તરફની દીવાલ ઉપર, નાની નાની ૨૨ પંક્તિઓમાં, આ લેખ કોતરેલો છે. લેખમાં જણાવેલું છે કે—

સં. ૧૬૫૦ના પ્રથમ ચૈત્ર માસની પૂર્ણિમાના દિવસે,+ ચારિત્રપાત્ર અને સન્માર્ગગામી એવા સાધુ રૂપ સમુદ્રને ઉલ્લસિત કરવા માટે જેઓ ચંદ્ર જેવા છે, જેમનાં વચનોથી રંજિત થઈ અકબર બાદશાહે શત્રુંજય પર્વત જેમના સ્વાધીન કર્યો છે અને ભટ્ટારક વિજયસેનસૂરિ પ્રમુખ સુવિહિતજનો જેમની ભક્તિપૂર્વક ચરણસેવા કરે છે એવા આચાર્ય શ્રીહીરવિજયસૂરિના મહિમાથી આનંદિત થઈ બાદશાહે શત્રુંજયની યાત્રાએ જનાર બધા મનુષ્યો પાસેથી જે દિવસે મસ્તક કર (માથાવેરો મૂંડકો) લેવાનો નિષેધ કર્યો છે તે જ દિવસે, ઉક્ત આચાર્યવર્યના શિષ્ય, સકલવાચકશિરોમણિ શ્રીવિમલહર્ષ ઉપાધ્યાયે પં. દેવહર્ષ, પં. ધનવિજય, પં. જયવિજય, પં. જસવિજય, પં. હંસવિજય અને મુનિ વેસલ આદિ ૨૦૦ મુનિઓના પરિવાર સાથે નિર્વિઘ્ન રીતે, શત્રુંજયની યાત્રા કરી છે.

પાઠ

१. ॥ श्री ॥ सं १६५० [प्र] चै पूर्णि-
२. मायां सुविहितसाधुक्षीर-
३. सागरप्रोल्लासशीतपादानां
४. निजवचनरंजितसाहिश्री-
५. अकब्बरप्रदत्तश्रीसिद्धशै-
६. लानां भटा¹रकश्रीविजयसे-
७. नसूरिप्रमुखसुविहित-
८. भक्तिभरसेव्यमानपादा-
९. रविंदानां श्री ६ श्रीहीरवि-
१०. जयसूरिपादानां माहात्म्यप्री-
११. णितसी²हिनिर्मितसकल-
१२. सत्वद्रव्यग्रहण[मु]क्तिका-
१३. यां प्रथमचैत्रपूर्णिमायां [त-]
१४. च्छिष्यसकलवा³चककोटि-
१५. कोटीरशतकोटिश्री ६ श्रीवि-
१६. मलहर्षगणिभि⁴। प. पं. देव-
१७. हर्षग. श्रीशत्रुंजयकृतकरय-⁵
१८. पं. धनविजयग. पं. जयवि-
१९. जयग. जसविजयह⁶सवि.
२०. जयग. मुनि वे [स]लादिमुनि-
२१. शतद्वयपरिकरितैर्निर्वि-
२२. ⁷-कृता यात्रा इति भद्रम् ॥

* એપિગ્રાફિઆ ઇન્ડિકા, પુ. ૨, પૃ. ૮૧; જિનવિજયજી, પ્રાજૈલેસં, ભા. ૨, લેખ ૩૩

× તા. પાલિતાણા, જિ. ભાવનગર

\+ એ વર્ષે ચૈત્ર અધિક ન હતો, સં. ૧૬૫૦ના ચૈત્રની પૂનમે ઇ. સ. ૧૫૯૪ની લગભગ ૨૬ મી માર્ચ હતી. — સં.

૧-૭ માટે જુઓ પૃ. ૧૧૮.

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Appendix – V

This edict of *Shatrunjaya* hills was written in V.S. 1647 i.e. A.D. 1589, it has the names of Emperor Akbar and Jain saint Hiravijaya Suri.

નં. ૧૨

શત્રુંજયનો શિલાલેખ, વિ. સં. ૧૬૪૭*

શત્રુંજય પર્વતના[1] સહસ્રકૂટ ઉપરના આંગણામાંનો લેખ :—

પાઠ

॥ ॐ ॥ संवत १६४७ वर्षे फाल्गुन मासे शुक्लपक्षा[2] पंचम्यां तिथौ गुरुवासरे[3] श्रीतपागच्छाधिराजपातसाहश्रीअकबरदत्तजगद्गुरुबिरुदधारकभट्टारिक[4] श्रीश्रीश्री ४ हीर-विजयसूरीणामुपदेशेन चतुर्मुखश्रीधरणविहारे प्राग्वाटज्ञातीयसुश्रावक सा० खेता नायकेन भ्रातृपुत्र यशवंतादि कुटुम्बयुतेन अष्टचत्वारिंशत् (४८) प्रमाणानि सुवर्णनाणकानि मुक्तानि दिक्सत्कप्रतोलीनिमित्तमिति श्रीअहमदाबादपार्श्वे उसमापुरतः ॥ श्रीरस्तु ॥

* પૂરણચંદ નાહર, જૈલેસં, ખં. ૧, લે. ૭૧૪

1 પાલિતાણા (જિ. ભાવનગર) પાસે

2 વાંચો પક્ષે. સં.

3 ૧૮ મી ફેબ્રુઆરી, ઇ. સ. ૧૫૯૧ —સં.

4 વાંચો ભટ્ટારક —સં.

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